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Reforming Tastes: Taste as a Print Aesthetic in American Cookery Writing

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REFORMING TASTES:

TASTE AS A PRINT AESTHETIC IN AMERICAN COOKERY WRITING

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ABSTRACT

Many eighteenth-century philosophers such as Kant and Hume worked to develop discourses of taste as a means of standardizing cultural behaviors. Using physical taste as a metaphor for aesthetic perception and judgment, these writers could both define and abstract group boundaries. As American writers worked to distinguish their nation from their British forebears, many recognized the utility of taste-based discourse and worked to develop cultural tastes around shared principles of egalitarianism and democracy. Cookbooks and domestic writing soon engaged these discourses, as it was the task of women to cultivate a virtuous citizenry, and—through domestic print culture—to demonstrate the deleterious effect of unrestrained individual appetites on the progress of an American public. Cookbooks, however, complicate the metaphor of taste by their necessary emphasis on the physical body, its appetites and limitations. A study of cookbooks exposes methods of constructing of cultural tastes; cookbooks are thus essential to a complete examination of the development of American tastes.

Throughout the nineteenth century, domestic writers engaged and developed discourses of taste in cookery writing in order to dictate cultural standards based on their material counterparts, be they food or consumer habits. They worked to classify society based on performance of these tastes. This discourse allowed cookbook authors access to public debate on a variety of topics, from national politics to religious movements. Since its development as a significant component of early American print culture, cookery writing has exercised its public

potential by manipulating taste, a function of both nature and culture, to engineer specific social behaviors or to define and critique group boundaries. No other print documents depict more fully the complex negotiation of individual and social body that this discussion requires. Taste is a function of the individual that requires a communal system of language to convey. It is a natural function of the human body that can also shape the social body. The use of taste to represent and convey cultural ideologies rests on this paradox.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to Dan and my parents, who always supported me, and to Mercer, who always sat beside me.

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Introduction: Taste and the American Cookbook

In a 2009 *New Yorker* article, "What's the Recipe?," Adam Gopnik explores our culture's fascination with cookbooks, why so many people collect them, pile them on nightstands for bedtime reading, and mark recipe after recipe as if we'll ever have the time or occasion to make them all. Yet, he writes, the problem is less about the volume of recipes we collect than our constant disappointment with the outcome. He notes of the novice cook, "if the first thing a cadet cook learns is that words can become tastes, the second is that a space exists between what the rules promise and what the cook gets." Gopnik concludes while that no text can replace handed-down advice, it is our "desire to go on desiring, the wanting to want" that makes us keep reading. Yet in this space between words and results exists the potential of myriad cultural meanings to be imposed on the rhetoric of the recipe. Perhaps we read to teach ourselves to cook, fearing that we might be judged poorly in a society obsessed with food. Perhaps we consume recipes that ensure us we can throw the perfect party in order to gain a reputation for effortless entertaining. Perhaps, then, what keeps us reading is not only desire for the perfect pie crust or roast chicken, but rather the desire to understand our tastes, to fortify group affiliations or to strengthen our sense of self. Gopnik writes, "Between the rule and the meal falls the ritual, and the real ritual of the recipe is like the ritual of the law; the reason the judge sits high up, in a robe, is not that it makes a difference to the case but that it makes a difference to the clients. The recipe is, in this way, our richest instance of the force and the power of abstract rules." Our desire, then, is to

create a system to understand our place among the competing and often contradictory demands of modern society. In this way, cookbooks have performed much the same function throughout their long history.

Despite the difficulty in determining the appeal of cookbooks, they often fall through the cracks of a variety of academic disciplines. Cookbooks are usually considered by historians, anthropologists, and sociologists to be too personal to be culturally representative; they often raise questions of authenticity to the "actual" food culture of a particular group or region.[1] Cookbooks are dismissed by many literary critics as lacking narrative complexity or literary craft; they prefer to examine food moments in fictional texts or memoirs rather than cookbooks themselves.[2] Feminist scholars, working to excavate previously ignored women's writing, often regard them as too conservative or not exceptional. Meanwhile academic studies of food abound. They explore food histories, food memories, food economies, and food movements, and food cultures;[3] they examine food's role in domestic history;[4] they study trends in food television,

[1] See Rebecca Sharpless, *Cooking in Other Women's Kitchens: Domestic Workers in the South, 1860-1960* (2010) and Jeff Miller and Jonathan Deutsch, *Food Studies: An Introduction to Research Methods* (2009).

[2] Several studies of food in fiction include Diane McGee's *Writing the Meal: Dinner in the Fiction of Early Twentieth-Century Women Writers* (2002); Laura Sloan Patterson's *Stirring the Pot: The Kitchen and Domesticity in the Fiction of Southern Women* (2008); and Mary Anne Schofield's *Cooking by the Book: Food in Literature and Culture* (1989). An excellent recent edited collection is Marie Drew's and Monika Elbert's *Culinary Aesthetics and Practices in Nineteenth-Century American Literature* (2009).

[3] Several significant food histories include Trudy Eden, *The Early American Table: Food and Society in the New World* (2008); Harvey A. Levenstein, *Paradox of Plenty: A Social History of Eating in Modern America* (1993), and *Revolution at the Table: The Transformation of the American Diet* (1988); Sidney W. Mintz, *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History* (1985), and *Tasting Food, Tasting Freedom: Excursions Into Eating, Culture, and the Past* (1996). For examples of scholarship regarding food memories, see Arlene Voski Avakian, ed., *Through the Kitchen Window: Women Explore the Intimate Meanings of Food and Cooking* (1997). In *Consumption, Food and Taste: Culinary Antinomies and Commodity Culture* (1997), Alan Warde studies food economies, production, and consumer behavior. Michael Pollan's *Omnivore's Dilemma* (2006) and Warren Belasco's *Appetite for Change: How the Counterculture Took on the Food Industry, 1966-1988* (1989) examine food movements in a political context. While "food cultures" is a broad term, it encompasses many important sociological and anthropological studies such as: Carol Counihan, *The Anthropology of Food and Body:*

food blogs, and food magazines;[5] they research the history of food items or figures in popular culture;[6] they describe the role of food in the progress and preservation of ethnic, regional, or isolated communities;[7] some even use archives to explore food manuscripts and menus.[8] Yet published cookbooks rarely receive scholarly attention as a genre unto itself, particularly those published prior to the twentieth century. They are often included in cultural biographies or studies of an author's complete body of work, such as Carolyn Karcher's biography of Lydia Maria Child or Kathryn Sklar's study of Catherine Beecher,[9] or in arguments concerning a canonical author's nonliterary sources. Cookbook histories and bibliographies are becoming more common, though these texts rarely include an analysis of the genre.[10] A recent food studies

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Gender, Meaning, and Power (1999); Alan Beardsworth and Teresa Keil, *Sociology on the Menu: An Invitation to the Study of Food and Society* (1997); Deane W. Curtin and Lisa M. Heldke, eds., *Cooking, Eating, Thinking: Transformative Philosophies of Food* (1992); Sherrie Inness, *Secret Ingredients: Race, Gender, and Class at the Dinner Table* (2005); Peter Farb and George Armelagos, *Consuming Passions: The Anthropology of Food and Eating* (1980); and Doris Witt, *Black Hunger: Soul Food and America* (1999).

[4] Priscilla J. Brewer, *From Fireplace to Cookstove: Technology and the Domestic Ideal in America* (2000); Sherrie Inness, *Dinner Roles: American Women and Culinary Culture* (2001); Anne Mendelson, *Stand Facing the Stove: The Story of the Women Who Gave America the Joy of Cooking* (1996); Susan Strasser, *Never Done: A History of American Housework* (1982); Glenna Matthews, *"Just a Housewife": The Rise and Fall of Domesticity in Americ*a (1989);

[5] See Ketheleen Lebesco and Peter Naccarato, eds., *Edible Ideologies: Representing Food and Meaning* (2010).

[6] Susan Marks, *Finding Betty Crocker: The Secret Life of America's First Lady of Food* (2005); Sherrie Inness, ed., *Kitchen Culture in America: Popular Representations of Food, Gender, and Race* (2001); Sylvia Lovegren, *Fashionable Food: Seven Decades of Food Fads* (2005).

[7] David Bell and Gill Valentine, *Consuming Geographies: We Are Where We Eat* (1997); Linda Keller Brown and Kay Mussell, eds., *Ethnic and Regional Foodways in the United States* (1984); John Egerton, *Southern Food: At Home, On the Road, In History* (1993); Wenying Xu, *Eating Identities: Reading Food in Asian American Literature* (2008); Donna R. Gabaccia, *We Are What We Eat: Ethnic Food and the Making of Americans* (2000); and Hasia Diner, *Hungering for America: Italian, Irish, and Jewish Foodways in the Age of Migration* (2001).

[8] See Janet Theophano, *Eat My Words: Reading Women's Lives Through the Cookbooks They Wrote* (2003).

[9] See Carolyn Karcher, *The First Woman of the Republic: A Cultural Biography of Lydia Maria Child* (1994) and Kathryn Kish Sklar, *Catherine Beecher: A Study in American Domesticity* (1973).

[10] See Carol Fisher, *The American Cookbook: A History* (2006); Sandra Sherman, *The Invention of the Modern Cookbook* (2010); and Margaret Cook, *America's Charitable Cooks: A Bibliography of Fund-Raising Cookbooks Published in the United States (1861-1915)* (1971).

methodology, *Food Studies: An Introduction to Research Methods* (2009), includes chapters on all of the areas described above, but only a few pages that mention cookbooks; even their coverage here is cursory. Cookbooks, it seems, present a problem even for cultural studies. What claims do they make? What arguments can be made about them? Are they more appropriately grouped with food studies, print studies, history, or literature? If we agree that we must employ an interdisciplinary approach to study cookbooks effectively, what methods must we use, and what cautions should we take, when considering the contribution of cookbooks to the field of cultural studies or American studies?

Domestic historians such as Rebecca Sharpless note that it is important to be cautious when studying cookbooks as historical documents.[11] This is true, and perhaps the best case for studying cookbooks as literary and rhetorical documents. Just as a novel is a representation of one's individual or community culture, cookbooks are representations of the author's (or authors') perspective of food and consumer choices in light of larger cultural movements. Like literature, cookbooks are representative creations, intentionally composed and framed by their authors to target a specific reading audience, to promote a cultural or social position, and to illustrate a way of life. They are often idealized depictions of domestic behaviors. These authors, however, are also products of their cultures, further complicating their texts. It is as wrong to read cookbooks as an accurate depiction of a particular food culture as it is to read *Uncle Tom's Cabin* as a realistic depiction of "American culture" prior to the Civil War. In fact, Doris Witt writes, "cookbooks and recipes are not just transcriptions of performative culture—far from it. They are complex rhetorical structures that can be decoded using the sorts of tools literary critics typically bring to … a novel" ("Fiction" 104). They enter the print market via publishing houses

[11] See *Cooking in Other Women's Kitchens*, xix-xx.

and are marketed and advertised much like literature. It is important to remember that the rules of the literary marketplace and the literate public always apply to cookbooks; they are not exempt from a scholarly understanding of print culture. This dissertation seeks to address this gap in scholarship by examining several groups of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century American cookbooks, often integrating them with their contemporary literary culture, in order to address how these cookbooks engaged cultural discourses of taste as a means of creating a public space for domestic discourse.

Most studies of food culture, be they historical, literary, etc. tend to treat cookbooks as artifacts first, and art second. This dissertation rejects this research hierarchy. It argues that cookbooks are artistic creations, literary documents that are composed for specific cultural purposes that extend far beyond simply recording recipes. They fill a gap in American print culture, which throughout the nineteenth century tended to exclude many non-white, non-male voices. Cookbooks are not simply a form of domestic instructional writing, meant to be relegated to the kitchen, but instead are active participants in an evolving American print culture. Their authors are not only cooks.[12] Many most likely considered their personal domestic skills secondary to their writing and public personas, even if that public persona was, paradoxically, an authority on domestic culture. Discussions of taste expected of cookbooks allowed women access to public discourse and debate on a variety of topics, from national politics to religious movements.

Cookbooks demonstrate their integration with American print culture most clearly through their discussions of taste. Modern food culture allows, even encourages, us to dwell on

[12] In some cases, particularly regarding those cookbooks published in the antebellum South, their authors did not perform most cooking tasks; their texts are more accurately guides to managing the slaves or servants who do.

sensory taste. Cookbooks and magazines often display images not of finished dishes, but of *eaten* dishes, the final swipes of chocolate sauce left on the plate suggesting the immense satisfaction of the consumer. Advertisements show satisfied eaters smiling in pleasure at the taste of a chocolate bar, a hamburger, even a nutritional supplement. Yet, like cookbooks, even these images of pleasure are still only representations of taste. Since at least the eighteenth century, Denise Gigante argues, physical and aesthetic tastes have informed one another; Romantic philosophy suggested that knowledge could be based on pleasure, and that "the application of gustatory language … to the faculty of aesthetic judgment at the very least suggests the degree to which sensory pleasure had begun to define aesthetic experience" (17).[13] A brief survey of taste in the *Oxford English Dictionary* suggests the myriad uses of this term: it is at once an experience and the fleeting nature of that experience, at once an individual perception and the public representation of that perception. The sheer volume of entries suggests the difficulty of describing taste; it is a function of the individual that requires a communal system of language and understanding to convey. It is a natural function of the human body that can also be shaped by the social body. Its popularity as a mode of discourse is a result of these dual meanings, one individual and one cultural. Its ability to create community rests on this paradox.

The fluidity between individual and social or national bodies is precisely the movement ideologies of taste are used to create. Benedict Anderson, who argues in *Imagined Communities* (1983) that nationalism is created and perpetuated at the advent of print-capitalism, writes that nations are imagined because "the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image

[13] Gigante notes that the original application of "taste" to aesthetic judgment is debatable. She cites Raymond Williams' *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (1976), which he describes "'good taast' in the sense of good understanding is recorded from 1425 and 'no spiritual tast' from 1502" (Gigante 16).

of their communion" (6). Because food is both a material and cultural necessity, its representation in American texts is a "fundamental system of communication" that allows for the dispersion of a representative national, regional, or class culture that can be reproduced in bodily form, via eating or consuming (Looby 6). Arjun Appadurai writes in "How to Make a National Cuisine" that "cookbooks appear in literate civilizations where the display of class hierarchies is essential to their maintenance, and where cooking is seen as a communicable variety of expert knowledge" (4). Discourses of taste, which work to represent in print the social implications of a perceived experience, allow us to better comprehend the multifaceted nature of early print culture as food bridges the gap between represented and real bodies.

Though scholarly studies of taste certainly exist (several recent studies are discussed below), few if any raise the question of taste as it functions in cookbooks.[14] This seems to be a foregone conclusion: cookbooks describe recipes that taste good. Why else, the implicit assumption goes, would they exist?

This dissertation argues that the American cookbook genre, particularly those published during the long nineteenth century, is an important contribution to American print culture precisely because cookbooks utilize, adapt, and complicate their contemporary social and philosophical understandings of taste. As taste is further disembodied by a culture that increasingly emphasizes reason and intellect to contain the threat of sensory pleasure (which elevates individual experience above group standards), cookbooks are required to emphasize the

[14] "Taste" is often used in the titles of food studies texts; few, however, examine the concept of taste so much as distinct food cultures or histories. In these texts, taste seems to indicate cultural preference moreso than individual experience, though few sufficiently complicate this concept. This is not to say that these are not useful studies, but simply that they are not studies of taste in the way that this dissertation seeks to explore the term. A few such texts include: Barbara G. Shortridge and James R. Shortridge, eds., *The Taste of American Place* (1999); John L. Hess and Karen Hess, *The Taste of America* (1977); Paul Freedman, *Food: The History of Taste* (2007); James Villas, *American Taste: A Celebration of Gastronomy Coast-to-Coast* (1982).

body. They also, however, must discuss taste, and this requirement permits them to take part in a typically masculine discussion of aesthetic taste and behavioral standards. Scholars rarely examine discourses of taste in cookbooks because, well, of course they discuss taste! Their cultural contribution is hidden in plain sight, as the saying goes. Individual bodies, consume, digest, and excrete; cookbook authors suggest that these bodily functions are directly related to one's food choices. Moreover, they suggest that these acts are a performance of one's tastes and have the ability to indicate one's race, gender, class, regional, intellectual, even spiritual status.

Despite their egalitarian potential, American cookbook history is primarily a history of the evolution of an American middle class. Unlike manuscript recipes, kept in private homes and passed through generations of women cooks, published texts require access to print technology. As such, the tastes presented are those of authority and capital, as well as desire to strengthen group identity and cultural influence. Everyone eats; not everyone writes, particularly in the early years of American development. Cookbooks are essential to a study of American taste discourses precisely because they evolved simultaneously with the American print culture that distributed those discourses to a widening reading public.

Structuralism and the Tasting/Tasteful Self

This dissertation argues that discussions of American tastes evolved through print discourse. The cultural study of food systems and representation relies heavily on structuralism and its derivative theories. Developed as a universal system to understand linguistic practices, Ferdinand de Saussure's linguistic theories,[15] led to theories that developed cultural meanings of food items through their abilities to distinguish the cook or the consumer from their perceived

[15] Saussure emphasizes meaning through difference, such as the difference of one signifier from another or--by extension--the difference of self from other.

social opposites. While Saussure's linguistic theories account for the relationship between the word (the signifier) and the mental concept it produces (the signified), they also imply the cultural production of meaning, be it of a word, a phrase, an object, or even an act or ritual. It is this aspect of structuralist theory—that meaning is culturally produced through the repetition of linguistic systems or behaviors—that is particularly useful to anthropologists, folklorists, sociologists, historians, and literary critics who study food cultures. Because food is associated with its producers and consumers, it has a unique connection to the body or the "self," and thus can be used in the process of self- or group-definition through differentiation. Roland Barthes, Claude Levi-Strauss, and Pierre Bourdieu are particularly influential to this study of taste in food writing.

Claude Levi-Strauss' famous "Culinary Triangle" (1966) demonstrates the application of structuralist linguistic principles to other fields, particularly cooking, which is "with language a truly universal form of human activity" (Levi-Strauss 28).[16] According to Levi-Strauss, the raw, the cooked, and the rotted comprise three points of a semantic triangle, the first (the raw) unmarked by culture, and the others (the cooked and the rotted) forms of cultural and natural transformation, respectively. Like linguistic phonemes, these categories are never "pure" but are instead marked from the outside or "mediated" by cultural systems. While the specific manifestation of these systems may vary based on geography, as Levi-Strauss demonstrates through numerous examples, their basis in the culinary triangle, or the nature-culture opposition, is a constant. Furthermore, various modes of cooking connote their cultural origins and levels of progress since, as he argues, roasting "is on the side of nature" while boiling, which requires a

[16] Though he later revised this thesis, as Counihan and Van Esterik point out, its original argument was and still is a formative early study in food and language, and by extension print (Counihan and Van Esterik 9).

receptacle, is "on the side of culture" (29). While this system creates a series of binary oppositions—nature and culture, for example, and their representative modes of roasting and boiling—Levi-Strauss argues significantly for the distinct relationship between language and food, as well as for a system of observation of food cultures. He notes, for example, that cooking behaviors indicate class status within a society. Roasting not only produces waste--unlike boiling, which "conserves entirely the meat and its juices" (31)—and thus indicates the behaviors of an aristocracy rather than the economizing efforts of the lower class, but it also requires no cooking objects, which would indicate a domestic act usually performed by women or slaves. Thus race, class, and gender merge in a social assessment of food culture and representation.

In *Mythologies* (1957), Roland Barthes discusses *Elle*'s presentation of prepared dishes in "Ornamental Cookery." He argues that since the journal's role is to "present to its vast public which (market-research tells us) is working class, the very dream of smartness," its cookery advice is thus "based on coatings and alibis, and is for ever trying to extenuate and even to disguise the primary nature of foodstuffs" (78). Barthes signals the class affiliations of both magazine and food and demonstrates how their contradiction produces meaning to a reading public. The problem is not stuffing the partridge with cherries, he argues of his central image in this section, but rather affording the partridge in the first place. Thus he concludes that *Elle*'s is a "cuisine of advertisement," that readers recognize that "ornamental cookery is supported by wholly mythical economies" (79). Meanwhile, he notes that a journal addressed to a middle-class audience, *L'Express*, depicts middle-class cookery, items both familiar and affordable to their readers. According the Barthes, the working class requires a fiction, while the middle class is permitted a reality. His argument suggests two important features of nineteenth-century American cookery writing: first, that middle-class tastes are almost always described as natural

or standard, a concept suggested by the congruence of cookery advice and reading audience in *L'Express*; second, that working-class tastes as they actually exist are rarely described, but rather fictionalized, adapted, or critiqued. Lack of access to print technology means that the working class will rarely be afforded the opportunity to address their own members in the ways middle and upper classes can. As such, they will rarely experience the sense of community and class-consciousness the others will. Cookery, like class mobility, is presented to them as a fiction.

Barthes' *Mythologies* destabilizes the pureness of meaning found in Levi-Strauss and Saussure by arguing that it is not only found in the difference of one signifier from another, but also in their associations: "In each sign may be read traces of the signs that have been excluded in order to produce it, or evidence of the strains required to police the boundaries of self and other" (Ashley, Hollows, etc. 6). Barthes privileges food as a system of meaning to interpret a variety of cultural behaviors. Both Barthes and Levi-Strauss, however, depend on a closed system of interpretation, an existing "truth" to which one can apply a linguistic system as an interpretive device. In other words, their systems "exist prior to their human subjects, profoundly shaping their consciousness of the world and limiting their freedom of action within it" (Ashley, Hollows, etc. 7). Only when we examine this external Truth or authority can we truly understand ideology and the network of competing meanings that produce the self and its relationship to its society at large. Taste, then, becomes an important mediating factor, as it is at once a function of the individual as well as of the social body. It suggests as physical self as well as a self constructed by an ideologically-based cultural ordering system. Cookbooks' complicated negotiation of physical and ideological tastes reveal these underlying ideologies.

Pierre Bourdieu's *Distinction* (1984) is an important post-structuralist examination of taste and its social formation and signification. Bell and Valentine argue that tastes both reflect

and construct who we are as individuals and as a society. Bourdieu argues that certain classes represent their tastes as dominant, legitimate, and natural in order to define themselves and distinguish them from other classes. This is perhaps the primary goal of many of the cookbooks discussed in this dissertation; as such, Bourdieu's work is central to understanding their social purpose and function.

In *Distinction*, Bourdieu examines the tastes and consumer preferences of various classes in France in the 1960s, and ultimately argues that tastes are governed by class cultures and their struggles for power based on possession of capital (economic, cultural, etc.) and opportunity (Bourdieu 144).[17] Bourdieu describes a group's cultural disposition as the *habitus*, or the "system of dispositions and schemes" which order a culture's understanding of itself and its social relations (Jenkins 36). In Bourdieu's formation, the habitus, originally a Latin term that designated the state of the body, now describes the movements of a cultural body. The habitus exists as a shared understanding of cultural values, or a group's sense of itself; as the combined social actions of a group, or its speech patterns, consumer practices, etc.; and as the sensory or embodied experiences of a group (Jenkins 74-75). It is perfectly situated for a discussion of taste as it is at once embodied and detached, physical and cultural. Bourdieu's conception of the habitus mediates between these states.[18] The habitus governs a culture's attitudes toward food or their tastes, both physical and aesthetic. He distinguishes between working class and bourgeois consumption, arguing that the working class' disposition for immediate gratification and abundance—in contrast to a bourgeois emphasis on refinement and restraint—indicates a

[17] While some critics have argued that his argument is specific to a particular place and time, his emphasis on class distinction in food behaviors is demonstrated explicitly in food texts throughout the nineteenth century, and for this reason is a useful addition to this study.

[18] It is here that we see Bourdieu's relationship to structuralism. While he does to some extent set up a series of oppositions, he argues that they are a product of culture, rather than an entity existing outside of or prior to culture.

reaction to the power of bourgeois cultural dominance as well as a symbolic representation on one's ability to provide food when in reality this is often in doubt (Bourdieu 179). Bourgeois tastes are, likewise, constructed to reject the perceived vulgarity of the lower classes, and the cultural capital of the middle classes, based on access to print and opportunities for public social discourse, helps to legitimize or naturalize their tastes, thus characterizing other classes as the "other" in opposition to the dominant "self." These behaviors are often represented as both one's preferences for a food item and one's assessment of the sensory experience of its consumption. This process is then extended, through patterns of behavior, to represent the aesthetic and sensory preferences or tastes of a group or class.

We cannot argue, therefore, that taste is a sensory experience or authority that exists outside the realm of cultural production. As taste is the subjective experience of the individual, it would seem incapable of conveying representative cultural ideals. However, the taste buds are only one interpretive device among many. We must understand taste as a combination of physical and cultural factors, or an ideological system governing the group who must learn and perform these tastes. It becomes impossible to distinguish one's sensory experience from the cultural values it signifies. Furthermore, when taste is represented in print, it is thrust into a system of cultural and linguistic signification that must extend to an audience beyond the self, and thus it becomes increasingly difficult to parse the meaning of the sensory experience from the learned response. Nor is this a productive endeavor. Rather, what this discussion demonstrates is that taste, as a presumed function of the individual as well as a product of cultural behaviors and beliefs, has the ability to demonstrate the relationship of self and community, of individual body and imagined group "body." This is the project of most

nineteenth century cookbook authors, and the reason why an examination of taste as it functions in cookbook is vital.

A Brief History of Taste and Food Representation

Scholarly studies of taste, such as those by Denise Gigante and Carolyn Korsmeyer, often emphasize aesthetic preferences, or taste in a cultural context. While they discuss physical taste as a function of appetite, their primary purpose involves tracing the cultural philosophies of taste away from its bodily associations toward a more representative and socially accessible discourse of external or cognitive tastes. Cookbooks, however, engage both meanings. They function in a print culture that promotes an explicit discussion of aesthetic taste, as Gigante and Kosmeyer demonstrate, yet they are also connected to individual physicality in a way that other print documents are not. Cookbooks provide a domestic education to ensure both physical health and virtuous behavior; as such, their use of "taste" complicates its social significance. Though they work to participate in rhetorical trends, they require a constant reference to the physical body and as well as to the individual, both of which oppose—even threaten--group standards of taste (behavior, consumer choices, etc.) discussed in popular rhetoric.

In *Taste: A Literary History* (2005), Denise Gigante explores the relationship of aesthetic and physical tastes, arguing that eighteenth-century British Romantic authors such as Keats and Byron used knowledge based on the pleasures of taste as a "trope for aesthetic judgment" (2). "Taste," writes Gigante, "was an apt metaphor for the kind of pleasure that does not submit to objective laws" (2). She traces the development of taste from Hobbes' interpretation in his *Leviathan* (1651), in which he argues that taste as the inevitable instinct of appetite is the driving force of humanity, to its Romantic reinterpretation as a metaphorical mode linked to one's

physicality. Enlightenment philosophers, she writes, "would train this appetite into a metaphorical endeavor—a taste for this or that" (6). In classical rhetoric, sight and hearing allow the subject a contemplative distance, thus gaining a reputation as "higher" senses or senses which engage the mind, while taste was considered an individual experience, "bound up with the chemical physiology of the body" and thus not reproducible as a cultural standard (3). Modern aesthetics, however, allows for pleasure and physicality. She writes, "by the eighteenth century, physicality provided access to cognitive dimensions of human experience, such as epistemology, morality, aesthetic pleasures and pains; the umbrella term for this new mode of embodied cognition was taste" (6). Gigante argues that the philosophical emphasis on cultural and aesthetic taste was a result of the efforts of an emerging middle class in the late eighteenth- to mid-nineteenth centuries to produce "tasteful" subjects and elevate the mind. She continues:

> The philosophical project of sublimating the Man of Taste from his own matter and motions involved the parallel rhetorical project of sublimating taste from the conceptual apparatus of appetite. …Unlike appetite, aesthetic taste was at once instinctual and guided by certain fixed rules that taste philosophers set out to identify. (Gigante 7)

Philosophers did not argue Hobbes' claim that taste was instinctive; rather, they turned instinctive pleasure or disgust into a system of rules by which cultural judgments could be made, and in turn, by which the class affiliations of the judge could be determined. Taste remained, however, physiological entity, and eighteenth-century writers continues to debate both its bodily and social functions.

In *Making Sense of Taste* (1999), Carolyn Korsmeyer traces the philosophical trajectory of taste. Like Gigante, she notes that taste is often catalogued as a "lower" sense because it

brings pleasure and therefore can be easily abused or perverted. "Philosophers," she writes, "have generally concurred that pursuit of taste for pleasure alone seems an unfit preoccupation for a being whose higher capacities require the efforts of rationality" (Korsmeyer 1). Yet prior to the nineteenth century, as women's abilities to reason were often called into question, taste as an aesthetic and cultural knowledge was often considered the purview of men only. Linda Kerber explains that recent women's scholarship has tended to deconstruct the rhetorical boundary between the "separate spheres;" scholars instead focus on fluidity: of movements, discourses, and behaviors. An emphasis on taste allows us to redefine (or perhaps shift) its focus from a gendered divide to the distinction between the tasting individual and the tasteful community.[19] It also connotes specific class standards: taste is a pleasure allowed to the "leisured few" who have no worries of starvation or deprivation. Often associated with appetite, or the instinctual drive to feed the body for survival, taste is often considered to be primitive, based on humans' most "animal" or brutish needs. Indeed, many nineteenth-century cookbook authors use this rhetoric and imagery to convey the need to control one's tastes. Mary Mann likens children to animals; children must learn to control their appetites in order to, in essence, become human [footnote both her text and my discussion of it]. This process of domesticating one's tastes denotes civilization. The ability to distinguish taste as an instinctual appetite from taste as a cultural, rational, *controllable* quality marks this transition. The ability to disguise the distinction creates the domestic expert.

Denise Gigante refers to this process of civilization (in eighteenth-century British society) as the result not only of consumer practices, but also of the metaphor of consumption, what she calls the "gustatory metaphor" (48). Taste was a popular rhetorical device during the

[19] See Linda Kerber, "Separate Spheres, Female Worlds, Woman's Place: A Rhetoric of Women's History" (1988).

British Romantic period, used to elevate and distinguish bourgeois culture from the vulgar, instinct-driven lower classes. As increased industry gave rise to consumer culture, one's access to print and one's purchasing power joined one's eating habits and behavior as a means of expressing proper tastes. She writes that this metaphor's "internal dialectic of taste and appetite" shapes communities by reproducing, via print representation, "the tasteful self." Its ability to unite material and representational experience and distinguish classes and groups that had the leisure time and capital to enjoy both led to a flourishing discourse that was "a gustatory mode of aesthetic experience, …a way out of abstraction and into a robust sensibility" (16). During the Revolutionary period, British writers criticized colonists based on their "primitive" tastes; this characterization aided in the promotion of various acts of harsh taxation and legal limitations. Cultural representation of colonists as "tasteless" or uncivilized marked them as inferior to the British, and thus a subservient population that must be controlled, dominated, and civilized. American writers such as Benjamin Franklin realized that taste lay at the basis of many arguments against Americans. Rather than argue against the metaphorical implications of their tastes, colonists instead developed a new rhetorical system of taste based on American character and principles. Monika Elbert notes, "As novelists, poets, essayists, letter correspondents, diarists, and domestic manual writers considered the manner in which Americans might best cultivate their harvest, the idea of taste developed in relation to a vast set of palates, and as observed by recent critics of food culture, transferred aesthetic deliberation from the sublime (of art and artfulness) to the commonplace (of cooking and eating)" (Drews and Elbert 1). While this project began in the political arena, it soon became the task of food writers, most specifically cookbook writers, to ensure a virtuous citizenry by cultivating proper tastes. By giving taste such power, however, writers also understood the effects of bad taste, or poor health and consumer

choices of an American public. So while food writers praised American tastes for economy, for example, they also worked to demonstrate the deleterious effects of uncivilized, or unrestrained, appetite on the progress of an American public.

The variety of definitions and uses of "taste" in nineteenth-century domestic texts can easily confuse the modern reader, and lead to its near-absence from scholarly study. Korsmeyer writes that when scholarly studies do mention literal taste, or "the kind that takes place in the mouth," it is only to use it as a metaphor for aesthetic taste or to dismiss it entirely as beneath the cerebral realm of philosophy and intellect (1). Taste, however, is anything but basic or instinctual. This misconception results from the rhetorical equation of "taste" with "appetite" or "consumption." While these are all important concepts, worthy of scholarly study, taste is the most cerebral of the three. Tastes are educated, cultured, and gradually but urgently "civilized" by domestic experts. Much like a child who must be taught to like broccoli, adults learn through repeated consumption and social pressures what foods they should like and dislike, and their physical palates adapt. Representation of one's bodily knowledge or perception, in other words, is filtered through ideology. Though Korsmeyer correctly notes that most theories of taste argue that it "presents base temptations that in a moral life must be controlled," it is the very ability to rationally control one's tastes that elevate it from the realm of instinct (2). The challenge to the domestic expert, then, is to make her view of cultural taste appear instinctual, natural. Domestic writers capitalize on the dual meanings of taste, its ability to unite and define the roles of mind and body, for their authority and cultural capital.

To characterize taste as "low" due to the necessity of food for survival further illustrates this rhetorical elision. Taste governs what is consumed, but food--not taste--is necessary to sustain the physical body. One feeds the body when one is hungry; eating simply because one

has a "taste" for a particular item is not satisfying hunger or survival needs. In turn, not eating when one is hungry because food does not taste good demonstrates the cognitive, psychological dimensions of physical taste. For this reason, taste is at best irrelevant and at worst life-threatening, for overly-developed or specific tastes can lead to death if one refuses to eat what is available. Though cookbooks initially appear to be the most obvious of sources for a study of taste, it seems they are often dismissed—by both scholarly communities and the general public--as simply instruction manuals in food preparation, thus focused only on physical taste. Yet cookbooks, charged with ensuring that American women receive a standard and socially-acceptable domestic education, have the complicated task of teaching women how food should taste *and* what their tastes for food should be.

The discussion of taste in American cookbooks can be divided into two broad categories: sensory, individual taste and cultural, communal tastes. These tend to be relegated to specific areas of the text. While the recipes often suggest adding a spice "to taste," or to suit one's preference, the author's introduction rarely engages physical taste. Instead, the author's comments tend to demonstrate her continuity with cultural trends. While taste may refer to preference, it is presented as the ideal preference of the community, class, region, or nation. For example, when Amelia Simmons discusses the "ruling taste of the age" in *American Cookery* (1796), she is referring to cultural preferences for food, fashion, behavior, etc., based on an emerging national identity that is the product of a wider (i.e. not only domestic) print culture (cite Simmons). In many cases, the author's introductory comments provide a framework in which to understand her later references to physical taste. When Mary Mann argues in *Christianity in the Kitchen* (1858) that Americans often use spices to cover inferior foods, or over-season to the detriment of the digestive system, readers understand that when she later

suggests to season "to taste," even those physical preferences must fall within the parameters of her earlier discussion of Christian cookery.[20]

Physical taste is not sublimated to cultural taste, however; the two must work in tandem to produce proper American bodies, be they republican, Christian, southern, or scientific. Cookbooks do not disguise the presence of physical taste in the processes of cooking and consuming. Instead, they rely on the cultural ramifications of taste to teach readers the values they should associate with a dish that tastes salty, sweet, seasoned, or rich. The values associated with particular tastes evolve throughout the nineteenth century, and thus its discussion in cookbooks evolves as well. Taste as a means of social control, however, remains a constant in domestic writing.

Methodology

More recently, scholars of women's history began to shift their terminology from "women's sphere," which they argue is an oppressive, limiting term, to "women's culture," a liberating term ("Rhetoric" 17). This legacy of women's studies informs this dissertation. A thorough examination of physical and cultural tastes in American cookbooks suggests that women are active participants in discourses previously assumed to be the purview of the public male sphere. As such, a discussion of taste in food writing indicates that "private" is not the domestic space, but rather the sensory experience of the individual which, when conveyed to an audience through print, became representative, aesthetic, and public. Elizabeth Maddock Dillon

[20] Mann includes the phrase "to taste" in numerous recipes throughout her cookbook, usually in reference to salt, sugar, or other flavoring such as lemon or orange peel. She argues that nature has placed spices in the climates where they should be used, just as God has placed the foods they season in the proper climates. Importing unripe fruits and over-seasoning them to mask their inferior flavor is "unchristian," as it deprives Americans of "the pleasure God designed we should feel in partaking them" (11).

writes in *The Gender of Freedom: Fictions of Liberalism and the Public Sphere* (2004) that privacy is "*coproduced* together with public identity in the print public sphere" (19). This coproduction is clear in cookbooks' participation in a printed rhetoric of taste. Authors gain a reputation as domestic experts and with it, the ability to shape their culture's physical and material tastes, or their consumption at the table and the market.

When examining the role of taste in American cookbooks, it is important to understand the components of a cookbook and their contributions to this discussion. Each component—from the title to the recipes themselves--indicates group affiliations, intended audiences, discursive modes, and cultural perspectives. All of these suggest cultural tastes and preferences, as well as the role of the food text in group formation through the construction and representation of shared tastes. In "Claiming a Piece of the Pie: How the Language of Recipes Defines Community," Colleen Cotter describes the narrative structure of the recipe as a combination of six components: the title, list, orientation components, actions, evaluations, and coda. Cotter argues, like Barthes, that these narratives structure individual and community existence, and points out that Barthes even used the recipe as a metaphor for narrative organization (Cotter 58). These components comprise a system that all recipes share and through which they are accessible to a variety of readers.[21] She bases her analysis on sociolinguist William Labov's discussion of narrative framework.[22] The recipe unfolds much like a traditional narrative, she argues. The title presents an abstract of what is to follow, the list of ingredients and orientation components (which includes an author's discussion of the uses of the recipe as well as the reader's handwritten

[21] Her use of Barthes, as well as her sociolinguistic reading of the recipe and proposed universal system of interpretation, is another example the pervasive effect of structuralism and linguistics on food studies. Though she refers to community cookbooks in her study, her framework applies to the structure of commercial recipes as well.

[22] See William Labov, *Language in the Inner City: Studies in the Black English Vernacular* (1972).

notes) are required to understand the procedure or actions, and the evaluations and coda provide necessary concluding details such as serving suggestions or yield. Recipes composed prior to Mary Lincoln's 1884 *Boston Cookbook*, which standardized the modern recipe structure to include a list of ingredients and measurements prior to the action rather than integrated into the procedure, complicate this narrative element (Cotter 59). Viewed as an unscientific presentation, this integrated recipe narrative assumes a standard of domestic knowledge that recipes composed after the late 1880s do not, therefore creating community based on a shared domestic ideal rather than class-based instruction and standardization.[23] Also important for interpreting a recipe narrative are the orientation and evaluation components. These are likely to judge the taste or quality of a recipe, though some recipe titles include terms such as "plain" and "fancy" to indicate quality or usage. The orientation and evaluation notes, however, tend to reinforce the dual meaning of taste in cookery writing. They might ask a reader to season to taste, or they might note that a dish should only be made when its primary ingredients are in season for the best taste. Both of these are indications of the sensory experience of a dish, yet both are also produced by cultural standards which argue that overseasoning or purchasing imported, expensive out-of-season vegetables indicates a lack of taste.

When examining a cookbook as a whole, these components can also be expanded to include the title, subtitle, and author's presentation, discussed above, as well as the orienting introductions on which the majority of my argument is based. The author's introduction suggests her cultural perspective and framework, as well as the contribution she believes her text will make. It also allows her to demonstrate her knowledge of the field, as intertextuality is a common feature of nineteenth-century cookbooks. Many authors borrow recipes from one

[23] For more on this topic, see my discussion of domestic science, Chapter 4.

another; a few even recommend or cite a particularly useful source in their introductions as a means of indicating their intended reading audience and a potential companion volume for their instructions. Sarah Rutledge, for example, notes that her *Carolina Housewife* (1847) does not contain basic instruction as Eliza Leslie's *Directions for Cookery* (1837) contains an adequate discussion of this topic. Recipes, Cotter argues, are made intelligible through social interaction; shared cultural behaviors lead to variations in the manifestation of this structure in individual recipes, and in its interpretation by its intended readers. The composition and interpretation of recipes thus reflects and produces cultural tastes and the difficulty in differentiating the aesthetic from the sensory.

As this study examines author's presentation of her recipes as an indication of cultural tastes and audience, it is important to examine the components that market to and engage her potential readers, many of which appear on the title page of the document. The title is, in fact, perhaps the most important marketing tool for cookbooks, for implicit in the title is the cultural philosophy and intended audience of the text. For example, Lydia Maria Child's 1829 cookbook, *The Frugal Housewife*, immediately indicates to readers an emphasis on thrift as well as a means to navigate the unsure and often unpredictable economy of early America. It suggests that her cookbook will be useful primarily for those who might consider themselves middle class and below, or in need of lessons in domestic economy. Furthermore, it rejects the emphasis on abundance and luxury that Child believed had come to characterize American culture and would lead to its downfall. Also important in the discussion of titles is publication history. It was not uncommon for cookbooks to be published under a variety of titles, particularly in their early years when fewer published cookbooks meant that popular texts remained in print for decades and had to be adjusted for changing social behaviors and cultural tastes. The most common way

to accomplish this was the change the title. For example, in 1832, when Child's text was in its eighth edition, Child (or perhaps her publisher) changed the title to *The American Frugal Housewife*. This change occurred because Child attempted to publish her text in Europe and discovered that Susannah Carter, a British cookbook author, had already published a text called *The Frugal Housewife* in 1765, and which was republished in America in 1772. The new title indicates that her text, unlike many currently in use in America, is written for Americans, using American ingredients and techniques, and as such helps female readers identify as an American community with shared values and domestic strategies. The content of the text, however, did not change. In fact, though the title page was changed, any mention of the title throughout the text (such as page headings and references) remained "The Frugal Housewife," an indication that the print templates were not altered. It continues a process begun in 1796 with the first American cookbook (meaning that is was both written and published in America), Amelia Simmons' *American Cookery*.

The subtitle is the next element we must examine, and this feature, moreso than the title, is subject to trends in writing and publishing. Early American and Jacksonian era cookbooks such as Simmons' often include long subtitles that list in detail the types of recipes and/or advice one will find within their pages. Simmons' title page, for example, reads:

> American Cookery,/or the Art of Dressing/ Viands, Fish, Poultry and Vegetables,/and the best modes of making Pastes, Puffs, Pies, Tarts, Puddings,/Custards and Preserves,/and all kinds of Cakes,/from the Imperial Plumb to Plain Cake/ adapted to this country,/and all grades of life.

This long subtitle is a common feature of British cookbooks from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and its presence in Simmons' text belies its stylistic and culinary origins despite its use

of "American" in the title.[24] This contradiction illustrates one reason why we must read cookbooks as more than records of food history. While Simmons' recipes suggest that there was still a strong British influence in American cuisine at the turn of the eighteenth century, her title, subtitle, and preface demonstrate that her intention in writing was to create an American document, to stake her claim to these British recipes in order to create a unified American character. Her recognition of the need for an American cookbook demonstrates the importance of both food and print in early American culture. Child's text, on the other hand, does not include a long subtitle. It is far more straightforward, reading simply, "Dedicated to those who are not ashamed of economy." She not only indicates an audience, but also introduces a modernized stylistic distinction that many American cookbooks would follow in the succeeding years. Her brief subtitle even illustrates textually and visually her pervading emphasis on economy.

The presentation of the author often indicates genre fluidity and publication history in an effort to connect to its audience's current literary tastes. For example, the early editions of Child's *Frugal Housewife* do not include her name on the title page. It reads simply, "By the Author of Hobomok." This suggests several connected interpretations. The act of representing the author not with a name but with a print document indicates the detached nature, or lack of bodily connection, of early American print culture, suggested by Michael Warner in *Letters of the Republic*. It emphasizes the importance of print over authorship. It also suggests the connection of physical and aesthetics tastes, as readers assessed the credibility of the domestic

[24] The revised American edition of Susannah Carter's Frugal Housewife (1803), for example, is in full: *The Frugal Housewife, or, Complete woman cook; wherein the art of dressing all sorts of viands is explained in upwards of five hundred approved receipts, in gravies, sauces, roasting [etc.]* [she lists twenty-seven categories of foods at this point] *... also the making of English wines. To which is added an appendix, containing several new receipts adapted to the American mode of cooking.* It's original title is the similar, though it includes after the discussion of wines, *To which are added various bills of fare, and a proper arrangement of dinners, two courses, for every month of the year,* rather than the reference to the addition of the American appendix.

expert based on her print history as well as her culinary knowledge. Finally, it is further evidence that genre distinctions are fluid, and that the same readership is expected—or perhaps requested—by cookbooks and novels alike.[25] By the 1840s, however, Child's (married) name was added to the title page, so that it read, "By Mrs. Child, author of 'Hobomok,' 'The Mother's Book,' editor of 'The Juvenile Miscellany,' etc." (1844 title page). In this sense, the authority of the book evolved to rest on the authority of the author, rather than the authority of the printed word. Her textual achievements lent credibility to the text, but now only after her name. As further evidence that print no longer transcends the body (if indeed it ever truly did) her cookbook only went out of print after her work in abolition made her a more contentious political, rather than domestic, figure. This suggests that public perception of the authorial body is created by her body of printed works, and that public taste is an aggregate of these texts.

So we see that the components of the title page alone indicate to consumers the aesthetic context in which the text should be purchased and read. As such, the recipes that follow are understood as culinary representations of the appropriate tastes for the text's class affiliations. While they reflect cultural tastes, they also produce them; one system does not exist outside of the other. Consumers can choose to purchase the text that best designates their class, regional, or national consciousness; the shared sense of belonging perpetuates group identity and connects cultural values to consumption and ingestion. What these relationships--between the title, subtitle, preface, etc., or on a larger scale, between content and style--demonstrate is the need to read cookbooks holistically. Like a traditional literary document, we must understand a cookbook's features in their literary and historical contexts. Cookbooks are not only instructional

[25] For more on genre and the literary marketplace, see Susan Coultrap-McQuin, *Doing Literary Business: American Women Writers in the Nineteenth Century* (1990).

documents, and have never been read as if they were. Exactly how they have been read, though, is also a matter of literary and historical context.

In her influential study of recipe reading and narrative, "Recipes for Reading: Summer Pasta, Lobster à la Riseholme, and Key Lime Pie," Susan Leonardi argues that recipes are an embedded discourse rather than a set of ingredients and a list of instructions. Such lists, she writes, are "surprisingly useless" and "surprisingly seldom encountered " (340). Rather, recipes, like narratives, create and require a relationship between author and reader; they are a system of exchange, advice given by an author and made literal by a reader who often adapts the advice, even writing these adaptations in the margins or more liberally crossing out authorial instructions and replacing them with his or her own. Most important, though, is the initial establishment of a relationship: "Like a story, a recipe needs a recommendation, a context, a point, a reason to be" (340). A recipe, she argues, is a narrative strategy that extends beyond its assumed purpose, instruction in food or beverage preparation. This study asserts that published cookbooks allows readers access to the historical exchange between author and reader, to participate in a participatory discourse. If we consider the important role of food in everyday life and abstract discourse, we realize that food and the body are never far from the minds of nineteenth-century Americans. Food discourse teaches us to read print culture and domestic identity in new ways.

Karen Kilcup remarks of women writers' choice of genre, "the genres in which women chose to write were as often dependent upon the shape and rhythms of their lives as any other factor" (*Nineteenth* 5) By this she means serializing novels and writing shorter works for financial purposes, as well as writing journals, sketches, and other short or self-contained pieces, due to the housekeeping and childcare responsibilities that must be considered. These concerns also allow us to understand women's cookbooks and domestic manuals as valid literary

contributions that were accessible to women who were constrained by their traditional responsibilities. Much like a short story or sketch, a recipe is a self-contained unit that can be read alone or alongside similar units. A recipe book can be compiled in one's spare time and allows a woman writer to express authority in a realm society considers appropriate for her: the home. This is key to fully understanding the role these texts played in the literary/print scene. While women often included mitigating apologies, even concealment of their authorship, similar to contemporary novels, the recipes themselves indicate authority and mastery over a field, and they express the desire to communicate this mastery to others. Most often cookbook authors were literate, reading women who were well aware of popular fiction and political rhetoric. Despite being confined to the developing concept of the "private sphere," women were able to deploy their assigned duties as significant contributions to the public world of print. They conveyed, critiqued, and created tastes for a wide readership, adding to and expanding dialogues of American tastes.

Taste is a significant rhetorical device in American domestic writing. Since its development as a significant component of early American print culture, cookery writing has exercised its public potential by manipulating taste, a function of both nature and culture, to engineer specific social behaviors or to define or critique group boundaries. Cookbooks emphasize cultural tastes as well as the sensory tastes of the cook, and are fully engaged in the literary and political environment in which they are being written. Arranged loosely chronologically, the following chapters explore the evolution of taste in American domestic print culture. Nancy Cott writes of nineteenth-century women writers' continued emphasis on domesticity,

> It was the genius of the nineteenth-century bourgeoisie to make the contingent family pattern of domesticity seem necessary and, without acknowledging contradiction, to accept it as natural while trumpeting it as the height of civilization. Having been a value and a sign of a particular class, forwarded by that class as a universal norm, the discourse of domesticity evolved (especially during the half-century of national consolidation after the Civil War) into a national standard, used to understand, measure, and invite in or cast out cultural and racial groups such as Mormons, Asians, and freed blacks, as well as diverse Europeans. (*Bonds* xxiv)

This dissertation argues that middle-class American domestic experts developed discourses of taste to negotiate the boundaries between nature and civilization, public and private, particular and universal, as well as to fortify or question boundaries of race, class, even gender or region. Much of the "inviting in or casting out" described by Nancy Cott was performed by cookery and domestic writing promoting a dietary standard for the (implicitly white) American middle-class and variations for those outside of that group.

Chapter One explores the role of taste in the language of republicanism. Early settlers' food preferences tended toward familiar British dishes and ingredients, and away from many available food items that appeared coarse or unrefined. Heavily influenced by humoral theory, settlers often believed that their national identities—and their race and gender affiliations—would be compromised by a different diet, particularly one composed of food items consumed by the native "savages." As dissatisfaction with British rule rose among the colonists, however, and print—primarily newspapers, broadsides, and books—became a common means of disseminating information, a rhetoric of American taste developed. Though initially an indication

of food preference based on national affiliation, taste became in print a means to define a national body through the celebration of native food items. The very food system that led settlers to believe they would undergo physical and mental transformation if they varied their diet allowed them to now distinguish themselves in body and mind from their former British identities. Taste, then followed the trajectory of print culture: it became at once disembodied, representative, and unifying. In cookbooks, a rhetoric of taste as a celebration of national preference allowed women to participate publicly in the development and progress of national character. Influenced by Enlightenment philosophies of the distinction of mind and body and the concurrent transition from embodied manuscript writing to disembodied print, women could contribute intellectually while still conducting their gendered domestic duties. Yet print was not socially transcendent. Women came to dominate cookbook authorship—a genre suited to their traditionally gendered roles--as the larger republican print culture, as well as the educational and marital systems, were prohibitive.

Chapter Two follows the increased separation of public and private spheres of activity and their resulting moral characterizations. The 1830s and 40s brought a flourish of domestic publishing, what Kathryn Sklar describes as "manual mania" (v). The Industrial Revolution, the Second Great Awakening, and a Jacksonian disdain for the power of an elite few led to a marked difference in Victorian rhetoric from its republican predecessors. Rather than a mind distinct from the body, Victorian writers, particularly women, emphasized a mind—and spirit--determined by the body. One's consumption had a direct effect on one's moral character, and thus domestic experts encouraged readers to control their appetites by educating their tastes. As industrial technologies advanced and far more Americans lived in urban environments, women's domestic duties expanded to include purchasing some items previously made in the home. Taste

thus became a system of middle-class values that included food choices and cookery techniques, as well as one's behavior at market and skill as a consumer. Northern Victorian writers worked to naturalize their values through a rhetoric of taste that depicted America as God's chosen people, and charged women with the evangelical duty to spread His word by educating the public in the physical and moral ramifications of taste. These texts worked to development communal tastes by converting the threat of the individual or "uncivilized other" to an American middle-class standard. This chapter also suggests the implicit regionalism developing in American culture. As middle-class Victorian women writing in the northeast portrayed the tastes of a society increasingly dependent on industry and public labor as national standards, planter-class southern women published their own cookery manuals and adapted genre characteristics to suit class and local affiliations.

Chapter Three examines the role of taste in the development of regional affiliations throughout the nineteenth century. The first section is posed as a foil to Chapter Two, which discussed northern writers depicting their tastes as national standards. Cookbooks published in the antebellum South, however, used taste not only to describe moral values, but as a means of labor control and class reinforcement. Women writing these texts were often the wives of planters and thus oversaw domestic duties actually performed by slaves. Knowledge of proper sensory tastes allowed them to judge the abilities of a slave, and proper execution of domestic duties conveyed one's class status to guests and one's local community. The plantation economy in which these women lived and wrote led to a sense of taste based on sensory preference; this is due both to the limited perspectives resulting from the isolation of plantation units, as well as the agricultural abundance celebrated and enjoyed by the upper classes. While it is common today to discuss southern cuisine as distinctive, even exceptional, this is due in part to the deployment of

taste in early southern cooking texts. It is a mistake, however, to assume these texts are "southern"—rather, they describe the food cultures and recipes common to their local communities, based on the agricultural and human environment. While rice recipes were common in the lower regions of the Carolinas, for example, a cookbook published in that area might also include northern or European recipes collected by the author's own travels or those of a friend who shared her recipes. Domestic writing does not convey a conception of the "South" as a cohesive region until the Civil War.

As the century progressed, cooking texts varied their usage of taste to include pursuits beyond the salvation of the community or the preference of the individual. Chapter Three continues to describe the efforts of two regional cookbooks—one published in Philadelphia, the other in Richmond—to define Union and Confederate tastes during the Civil War. Both are community cookbooks, developed during the Civil War as a means of quickly and effectively raising money or compiling domestic information necessary for survival. They work conscientiously to illustrate both the material needs and aesthetic tastes of their respective regions, demonstrating the adaptability and potential of taste as a rhetorical concept. This project continues during Reconstruction, as cookbooks actively participate in a project of regional reconciliation already common in domestic fiction. Southern cookbooks in particular use the intimacy of sensory taste to suggest regional reunion as the creation of a national body. While this is similar to the function of taste in early American domestic writing, reconciliation rhetoric emphasized gendered regional distinctions and the psychological barriers of reunion, rather than women's intellectual and political contributions to a republican ethos.

Chapter Four argues that by the turn of the century, taste was widely accepted as a rhetorical mode as much as a physical experience, and was thus put to use by a variety of

Progressive reformers and reactionaries. Domestic scientists worked to introduce advancements in nutrition and sanitation technology to an American public not only through domestic print but also through cooking schools and public school curriculums. Like the early Victorian writers before them, however, they emphasized white, native-born, middle-class morality and behavioral standards, suggesting that a scientific approach to domesticity would better the American "race." As such, efforts at working-class reform emphasized a better quality of living through educated tastes, rather than upward mobility. Diets were catered to one's age, sex, class and working conditions; science was the standard, but domestic science's approach ensured that one could not transcend class limitations by diet. In fact, this was the very social ill they developed to reform.

Chapter Five builds on the use of domestic science rhetoric and racial ideologies by examining two divergent trends: African American-authored cooking texts, and Mammy cookbooks written by white southern women. As cookbooks established domestic literacy and expertise as the purview of the middle class, African-American women used the cookbook to position themselves as middle-class Americans, a rebuttal to their traditional representation as domestic laborers with instinctive, rather than learned or printed, domestic knowledge. At the same time, their domestic authority often rested upon this characterization. African-American women were believed to have a natural connection to food and taste that was irreproducible, thus requiring them to remain in servitude to whites, for whom taste was cultural and intellectual. By harnessing the power of print, African-American women were able to claim an intellectual expertise and thus exercise both meanings of taste in their domestic advice. In reaction to both the progress of African-American women and the perceived threat of the standardization of American food culture based on primarily northeastern Progressive values, another cookbook subgenre, the Mammy cookbook, emerged. Written by white southern women but published

primarily by northern publishing houses, Mammy cookbooks glorified the clearly stratified racial and class hierarchy of the Old South plantation myth, already popular as a reconciliation tool. These texts presented a peaceful image of a contented and defined society that stood in opposition to the often overwhelming, undefined, and contested project of reform in northern cities. These texts defined taste as a the mystical expertise of the Mammy and lamented her "passing;" much like commercial products that promoted Aunt Jemima's or Uncle Ben's secret recipes, Mammy cookbooks worked to limit the opportunities available to African-American citizens by depicting them as instinctual, bodily, and uneducated. Mammy cookbooks and commercial pancake mix suggested that African-American domestic bodies were required for white intellectual progress.

When we study cookbooks as representations of women's culture, we end up with a very personal, often conservative, and ultimately idealistic view of domesticity. When we broaden our scope to place them in a larger context of social discourse, however, their contributions to society become much more complex and clear. Against the backdrop of traditional studies of domesticity, cookbooks are an interesting study of specific instructions and evolving domestic rhetoric. Against the backdrop of Enlightenment and Romantic discussions of taste, food discourse becomes remarkably complex. Cookbook authors utilize discourses of aesthetic tastes popularized by Kant and Hume, yet their inevitable emphasis on the body requires them to revise these discourses in a domestic, gendered context.

Krishnendu Ray writes of taste, "Flavor cannot be witnessed. Appearance can. Flavor is momentary. Appearance endures. The operating principle, 'for show,' required that appearance dominate, as did the emphasis on a legible (edible) visual language of emblems and signs. This was, one might say, a cuisine of signs, a world made edible" (57). Cookbooks are the guides to

this “cuisine of signs,” printed documents that connect sensory tastes to their multifaceted cultural representations. Taste in cookbooks is neither wholly physical nor wholly aesthetic. They occupy instead a liminal space between these discourses, a space which allows them to explore definitions and performances of individual and group identities and to argue for their reform. Cookbooks play a major role in some of the most important philosophical discussions of last few centuries. And they do it all behind a veil of perceived conservativism and domesticity.

Chapter 1

Republican Tastes: Shaping Food Discourse in Early American Print Culture

Amelia Simmons opens her 1796 cookbook, *American Cookery*, the first both written and published on American soil, with the clear assertion that "this treatise is calculated for the improvement of the rising generation of *Females* in America" (3). In this phrase alone, she makes the bold assertion that a cooking text can improve the character of a population, in particular the first generation of American women. Yet these young Americans need not develop without precedent or history. Simmons writes in her preface,

> By having an opinion and determination, I would not be understood to mean an obstinate perseverance in trifles, … but only an adherence to those rules and maxims which have stood the test of ages, and will forever establish the *female character*, a virtuous character—altho' they conform to the ruling taste of the age in cookery, dress, language, manners, &c. (3, emphasis in original)

Simmons counters fears of a young nation's potential instability by reassuring readers that the principles of character that led to its founding are not based on transitory tastes but on historical experience and wisdom. While bodily trappings may evolve, Simmons emphasizes the importance of American character, and specifically the role of women and print in shaping and maintaining that character.

Simmons significantly engages a rhetoric of taste already present in print discourse. Denise Gigante notes that by the mid to late eighteenth century, "taste encompassed the fields of art, architecture, landscape, furniture, dress, manners, and eventually gastronomy" (47). Taste became a popular mode of discourse that governed all forms of consumption and public judgment.[26] Likewise, Simmons writes that in her text, "taste" can refer to cookery, dress, language, manners, and more (3). By clearly listing these categories, Simmons places her recipe book firmly in the realm of ongoing discussion regarding appropriate American tastes, and the need to distinguish them from European tastes for refinement and luxury. Though taste was usually considered a masculine quality, often developed in opposition to the "purely physical" feminine concerns of food and diet or, later, the sentimentality of the novel, Simmons suggests that women, food, and diet, play as important a role in managing tastes as men's material and behavioral concerns (Gigante 21).

Simmons also follows a generic tradition of including instructions for performing a variety of tasks, not all of them food-related. Janet Theophano writes that it is "in the Anglophone tradition for cookbook writers to speak out about other than culinary matters" (*Eat* 233). Cookbooks, both manuscript and print, have a long tradition of placing recipes for medicines or household items alongside recipes for foods; several, however, include metaphorical instructions for creating and enforcing proper or "tasteful" behaviors. Theophano describes Catharine Cotton's seventeenth-century English manuscript cookbook, which includes a recipe entitled "How to make a right Presbyterian in two days" (*Eat* 229). The recipe, in which "human vices correspond to ingredients for cooking" and "the outcome is a malevolent being,"

[26] Gigante cites as evidence for her argument Lance Bertelson's *The Nonsense Club: Literature and Popular Culture, 1749-1764* (1986): "Taste became the vogue … a code word for knowing how and what to consume, and for judging how and what one's neighbor consumed" (48).

illustrates upper-class English women's perception of this dissenting religious group during the Restoration (230, 232). This recipe suggests two important qualities of print and domestic writing. First, it implies a broad cultural understanding of the role of the recipe as a set of specific instructions for a variety of outcomes, rather than a narrow genre related only to food and physical nourishment. Second, it suggests a continuity of purpose: that preparing food to nourish the body is in essence creating a physical person, and that educating a population's tastes--be they sensory or cultural--can create a tangible sense of an imagined national body.

A product of the republican era, Simmons demonstrates the faith in print to shape a national body common to her contemporaries. She extends its power to domestic labor by highlighting women in the process of national self-definition. Beginning on her title page, she implies a particularity to American cookery, a distinctiveness separate from the recipes themselves. She refers to herself as "Amelia Simmons, An American Orphan," and continues throughout her preface to refer to the necessity of character for those orphaned in a new country. It gradually becomes clear that she is suggesting that all Americans are orphans, thus characterizing America as a place of maternal nurturing for these lost children. Women, she argues, must be forever virtuous if the American republic is to survive. There is an immediacy to her advice that reflects contemporary debates regarding the nature of the republic, the means of developing proper character and loyalty in such a young nation, and--most relevant to her genre--the role of taste in this process.

This chapter argues for the simultaneous and codependent development of American tastes and print culture. Through food and print, writers worked to develop a material and represented culture distinct from their British and European predecessors. They recognized the importance of taste, in every sense of the word, to distinguish themselves as literary and material

citizens of the new young nation. As Cathy Davidson argues of early American novelists in *Revolution and the Word* (1986), the task of the writer "was to find a distinctive voice despite the dominance of British and European traditions and against the demoralizing derision of Anglo-European arbiters of value and good taste" (3). At a time when Hume and his contemporaries promoted a "delicacy of taste," Benjamin Franklin described American taste as frugal, rational, and hardy.[27] Franklin represented food choices in print as abstract attempts to achieve public virtue and physical attempts to apply those virtues within the domestic spaces of everyday life. While many formative moments of his *Autobiography* (2003) concern his relationship to food, his treatment of them in print sets the stage for a discourse of taste adopted by political and culinary writers alike. When Amelia Simmons composed the first wholly American cookbook, she capitalized on Americans' abilities to distinguish between experiential and ideological tastes: though her recipes were primarily British in origin, the tastes she described were intentionally American. Several decades later, Lydia Maria Child based her arguments concerning proper American tastes in *The Frugal Housewife* (1829) on Franklin's principles. Likewise, her text is as much a collection of essays concerning American behavior as it is a recipe book. Child thus understands the expansive potential of domestic education and the formation of proper Americans through food and material consumption. Both Simmons and Child also address lower- to middle-class audiences: servants, women unable to afford servants, women who have fallen on financial hardship.[28] Despite their emphasis on nationhood, however, these texts are written for and about a primarily northeastern audience. In contrast, Mary Randolph's *Virginia Housewife* (1824) addresses a more aristocratic readership representative of her community in

[27] See Hume's "Of the Standard of Taste" in *Four Dissertations* (1757) for more on this topic.
[28] Simmons apologizes to potential upper-class readers, whom she describes as "the Lady of fashion and fortune," who may be offended by her advice to lower classes, specifically those who, by financial misfortune, "are reduced to the necessity of going into families in the line of domestics" (3).

Tidewater Virginia, though its republican themes are clear. Often described as the first southern cookbook, her text actually demonstrates a regional variation of republican motherhood based on class expectations.

In republican print discourse, food became a practical, utilitarian object and a literary, political aesthetic; taste designated at once a sensory experience and a rational set of virtuous characteristics. Each of these texts deals with lineage and inheritance, be it familial or cultural, even financial, in order to suggest the need for a consensus regarding American cultural traditions. Each indicates the importance of class, revising its definition from an inherited cultural standing to a social position based on one's labor, intellectual behavior, and performance of virtuous characteristics. Finally, each text discussed in this chapter examines the potential of food discourse to create a national body through civic and domestic education.

The Beginnings of American Taste

Historians have recently begun to emphasize the importance of food culture to the development of nationhood, and the role of the individual in that nation. Early American attitudes toward food demonstrate a sense of tastes based on the British identities of the settlers, often to the detriment of their physical bodies. Trudy Eden writes of seventeenth-century America that food was a means to rationally control one's sense of individual identity: "In a world that tied the physical body tightly to the mental, moral, and spiritual person, food served as the primary arbiter of identity ("Food" 39). Though, as Sandra Oliver argues, the deliberate deployment of humoral philosophy was waning in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century, many of its concepts were common in the popular imagination (196). Humoral philosophy asserted that of the six non-naturals that could alter bodily levels of heat and

moisture, food was the most important.[29] Philosophers believed that cookery methods could alter foods' elemental compositions and thus affect the individual's body; this theory served as the basis for much dietary advice, though it was rarely explicated to readers (Eden, *Early* 12; "Food" 31). For these reasons, many manuscript cookbooks contain recipes for both meals and medicines, often side by side on a page. Because body composition determined both health and character, consumption was vital to every aspect of early life.

While food has always been necessary for a culture's survival, early settlers realized first-hand the complications of this reality when they arrived in North America. They faced a land that did not have the cold, moist environment of England and therefore did not support the same types of foods. In fact, settlers rejected many native foods such as the tomato or potato, "often refusing to eat them until after Europe had accepted them and re-imported them to the land of their origin" (Root 10). In the minds of these settlers, they had to choose to survive by altering the elemental compositions of their bodies, thus altering their British identities, or to risk likely death. Food not only represented a nationality, it determined it. Foods were classified by their component elements, and also by their degrees of refinement based on texture: "Refined foods made 'civilized' bodies and gross foods made 'grotesque' ones" (Eden, "Food" 32-33). In the Chesapeake Bay area, early food writing indicates that this terminology shifted from "refined" to "English," and from "coarse" to "Indian." Due to these early associations with nationality and identity, it is not unusual that future writers used food for a multitude of political and social purposes. The majority of settlers' time was spent with food: growing it, preparing it, serving it,

[29] Humoral theory asserts that the four elements that compose the earth, as identified by ancient philosophers, each have a corresponding quality in the human body: air was dry, water was wet, earth was cold, and fire was hot. The ratio of these elements in the body determined an individual's characteristics, and these characteristics could be altered and manipulated through food and environment. Six non-naturals could also alter bodily levels of heat and moisture: food, exercise, sleep, fullness, air, and emotions (Eden, *Early* 12).

preserving it. Thus when printed texts became an important part of colonial and early American society, food discourse, so critical in everyday life, became central to print discourse as well. In *A Revolution in Eating: How the Quest for Food Shaped America* (2005), James McWilliams writes,

> The intimacy and familiarity with food that the frontier demanded of all Americans shaped their lives in fundamental and lasting ways, and its impact was furthered by the fact that the frontier never closed throughout the colonial era. Such a literal and nearly universal hand-to-mouth relationship with the food they ate, a connection much tighter than it had been in Europe at the time, became emblematic of life for all colonial Americans. (6-7)

Food representation thus became a way to help a geographically diverse population imagine themselves as part of a larger community of shared colonial experience; it combined the intimacy of private consumption with the public sense of belonging.

It is well documented that early settlers preferred familiar British dishes to their counterparts made with ingredients native to American soil, in part because doing so allowed them to identify with their British nationality. By the mid-1700s, however, a different trend began to emerge in American writing: *taste*, rather than particular food items, became politically and culturally significant. While the taste and texture of foods such as cornmeal presented a unique problem of identity for settlers in the 1600s, for example, they now became an important means to concretize abstract ideals and to create an American aesthetic. American taste for particular foods became a rallying cry for revolutionary writers, such as Benjamin Franklin, who discussed cornmeal in an impassioned response to an British critique of the corn (and by extension, those who ate it) in the London *Gazeteer* as "one of the most agreeable and

wholesome grains in the world and that johny cake or hoe cake, hot from the fire is better than a Yorkshire muffin -- But if Indian corn were as *disagreeable* and *indigestible* as the Stamp Act, does he imagine we can get nothing else for breakfast?" ("Homespun"). Franklin likens the perceived physical indigestibility of corn to the discomfort of the Stamp Act, arguing not only for the value of cornmeal but also for the abundance and variety of food in America. American tastes, he argues in essence, are not nearly as limited or overdeveloped as those of the British. Whereas the British can see only a lack of tea, Americans see an opportunity to vary their diets and recreate themselves.

The high tax on tea made it a luxury in early America, and thus a somewhat maligned item. Mark McWilliams notes, "in late eighteenth-century America, revolutionary rhetoric aligned 'the *tastes* of luxury' not with the upper class … but rather with British imperialism. … In their rhetoric, the myth of republican simplicity inverted the usual associations: 'the tastes of necessity' became fashionable" (369). Sensory taste, or an individual's physical experience of a particular food, became less important to American culture as food representation in print became central to national definition. Michael Warner writes that readers "incorporate *into the meaning of the printed object* an awareness of the potentially limitless others who may also be reading" (xiii, emphasis in original). Taste became an important textual aesthetic as well as a sensory experience, and consuming print, be it in the form of a novel, newspaper, or even a recipe, shaped the American body as did consuming American foods. Unlike other forms of textual representation, however, readers of cookbooks could literally consume foods the text figuratively described, and thus the act of eating involved layers of physical and representational meaning. As the link between printed and physical realities, food was integral to the

development of nation: it allowed for the physical of health and survival of bodies that would come to understand themselves as "American."

Cookbooks in Early America

The contributions of food writing to the development of an independent American identity can be traced to the earliest appearance of cookbooks (often called "receipt books" or "housewifery books") in the American colonies.[30] Writes Janet Theophano of this genre, "As much recipes for living as formulae for cooking, cookbooks are forums for discussing the conduct of life" (227). Like Anderson's imagined communities, these early cookbooks allowed women to view themselves as part of a larger reading and eating community that extended to their European roots. The prevalence of British cookbooks into the early nineteenth century suggests that these texts provided a necessary point of identification. Simmons' text, as the first American-authored cookbook, continued to demonstrate that they were in fact used for self and group definition, as it reframes the recipes in light of a new identity group: *American* women. Yet it still followed many of the generic traditions established by its predecessors.

Cookbooks have a long and varied history; Sandra Sherman writes, "to understand how the American cookbook developed we must think of it as initially Anglo-American" (vii).[31] The legacy of cookbooks on American soil begins with the first cookbook sent to the American colonies by the London Company: Gervase Markham's *The English-Housewife* (1615) in 1620 (Hayes 80). This text provided women settlers the security of a familiar record of their British

[30] The genre has a variety of names because, as Kevin Hayes notes in *A Colonial Woman's Bookshelf* (1996), these texts often blur the boundaries between conduct, devotional, medical, and cookery books (81).

[31] The first cookbook written and published in English is *This Is The Boke of Cokery* (1500); it emphasizes aristocracy and the "desire for upward mobility that would characterize seventeenth- and eighteenth-century [English] cookbooks" (Sherman xxxi).

food heritage and identity. E. Smith's *Compleat Housewife* appeared in London in 1727, and later became the first cookbook printed, though not written, in America, by William Parks in Williamsburg in 1742. Intriguingly, Parks did not simply reprint the text verbatim; he altered the text and recipes to suit American food culture, or American tastes based on available ingredients. He notes at the ends of Smith's preface that he has indeed made these changes based on ingredients found in this country, and has omitted those recipes which are not "useful and practicable here," and "which would only have serv'd to swell out the Book, and increase its Price" (qtd. in Hayes, 83). His emphasis on capitalism, economy, and frugality is an early indication of characteristics that would come to define American food writing. He alters a published text to suit the tastes of a new readership; this practice is also expected of recipe readers, who must adapt published advice to suit their situations. It is also significant that Parks, like Markham, is a man writing in a what is primarily a woman's genre, in this case adapting a female-authored text, again suggesting that food's role in American culture extends beyond gender or social boundaries, or that these categories were less definite than we may imagine.[32]

Perhaps the most important published cookbook prior to Simmons', Hannah Glasse's *Art of Cookery* appeared in London in 1747 and quickly became "the most popular cookery book during the last three decades of the colonial period" (Hayes 85).[33] This is one of the first

[32] Hayes notes that Markham's tone appealed to women, as he poked fun at himself for being a man instructing women in the arts of cooking and conduct. Markham, it seems, imagined his text would be used in conjunction with traditional familial female household instruction.

[33] Glasse's cookbook is referenced in Royall Tyler's *The Algerine Captive* (1797). Narrator Updike Underhill meets a woman who pretends to be learned – she asks for many of his books to read and returns them all very quickly, leading him to believe she's a voracious reader, which makes him very happy because everyone he meets is unappreciative of his classical education. He remarks: She borrowed books of me, and read them with astonished rapidity. From my own little library, and from those of my friends, I procured over sixty volumes for her; among which were Locke on Human Understanding, Stackhouse's Body of Divinity, and Glass's works, not on cookery, but the benignant works of John Glass, the father of Sandiman, and the Sandimanians; in which collection I did not however omit Pope's Homer, and

cookbooks to acknowledge the domestic labor that made possible the tastes of the upper class employers. Glasse, however, wrote specifically for the servants. She also underscores the role of print and the act of reading in one's abilities to prepare proper food, a theme developed by both male and female American food writers. She begins her text with the following statements:

> I believe I have attempted a branch of Cookery which nobody has yet thought worth their while to write upon; but as I have both seen, and found by experience, that the generality of servants are greatly wanting in that point, therefore I have taken it upon me to instruct them in the best manner I am capable; and I dare say, that every servant who can but read, will be capable of making a tolerable good cook, and those who have the least notion of Cookery cannot miss of being very good ones. (2)

Because she is writing to instruct servants in basic cooking skills, *The Art of Cookery* does not emphasize extravagant dishes or condiments, nor does it follow the pattern of cookbooks published by male chefs and use professional or specialized cooking terms unknown to the general public; for these reasons, it held great appeal for women in colonial America. For example, in her prefatory statements titled "To the Reader," Glasse writes, "if I should bid them lard [a fowl] with large lardoons, they would not known what I meant; but when I say they must lard with little pieces of bacon, they known what I mean" (2). Glasse uses everyday vernacular, while previous cooking texts used aristocratic language. She highlights this strategy in her preface, writing, "If I have not written in the high polite style, I hope I shall be forgiven; for my intention is to instruct the lower sort, and therefore must treat them in their own way." Glasse, in

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Dryden's Virgil: and, to my astonishment, though I knew that her afternoons were devoted to the structure of caps and bonnets, she perused those sixty volumes completely, and returned them to me, in less than a month. (53-54)

a sense, exposes the superficiality of aesthetic taste by demonstrating its emphasis on language rather than experience. While she claims that she uses "pieces of bacon" instead of "lardoons" for the benefit of servants, she also subtly argues for the artificiality of class-based taste distinctions: both classes consume "little pieces of bacon," regardless of its name or presentation. Early European cookery writers, often male, assumed that literate women would read cookery books to their servants, hence reaffirming their authority and class structure through both literacy and food culture. Glasse's text instead acknowledged increasing literacy rates and the need to advance the pursuits of a contemporary emerging working class. Amelia Simmons' 1796 *American Cookery* echoes this model for American servants, elevating their labor and character while redefining the cultural meanings of taste.

Finally, Susannah Carter's *Frugal Housewife, or Complete Woman Cook* (1765), published first in London and Dublin, then reprinted in America in 1772, was notable for its overt emphasis on economy, as well as its page-saving lack of a preface. Though this text was also popular in the colonies, it was becoming more obvious to American women that they needed a printed cookbook to represent their own developing food culture. They recognized that while these cookbooks appealed to them stylistically through their use of vernacular language and foodways, emphasizing the common over the aristocratic, they still did not teach new generations of colonial cooks how to use ingredients native to North American soil. The divergence between English food discourse and American food discourse grew larger as the need to adapt to physical circumstances outweighed colonists' native affiliations. Although Glasse and Carter later added appendices to their cookbooks that included American ingredients and recipes to increase their marketability, this very act--a textual response to American political and cultural independence--demonstrated the emerging distinctiveness of American tastes.

While women initially used cooking texts to connect them to a British reading community, they now needed cooking texts to document America tastes and, by extension, define their community boundaries. They had already begun to perform this function in their current cookbooks. Kevin Hayes writes, "Women often had their cookery books bound with blank leaves to allow them space to add their own recipes," indicating that they considered food writing a participatory discourse and themselves active members of this discursive community (88). While certain ideals common to British cooking texts such as frugality and temperance appealed to American women due to their experiences in the New World, the recipes that followed did not reflect these experiences. Though they might appreciate Glasse's preface, for example, women were required to actively change her recipes based on available ingredients, thus adopting for themselves the textual authority usually assigned the author. It was this act of reading about food through another's perspective, then adapting that perspective to fit an experienced reality, that gave recipes the power to create a national body. In this way, public printing and private writing practices coexist in the same document.

If, as Leonardi suggests, recipes require a relationship ("a context, a point, a reason to be") between author and reader for their success, print took this relationship out of the manuscript culture of the home cooking text and extended it to include infinite and unknown audience members (340). Food thus became a public, intellectual pursuit, as well as a material object to be consumed. It was this quality that allowed republican food discourse to revise traditional class and gender boundaries, to make domestic concerns national concerns, and to use experienced tastes as a central metaphor for American cultural progress.

Benjamin Franklin: American Man of Taste

Benjamin Franklin played an important role in the development of national discourses of taste. Though many scholars concentrate on the role of print in his *Autobiography*, few acknowledge the importance he gives food discourse in this discussion. Christopher Looby writes that Franklin's *Autobiography* is "an account of the nation's self-definition in language" in which Franklin represents his individual experience as an allegory for national experience (100). His use of culinary rhetoric echoes the philosophies of Enlightenment thinkers such as John Locke, who emphasizes the importance of the republican individual as representative of and indistinguishable from the republic itself.[34] Franklin's overt attention to taste is also common for public intellectuals during the mid to late eighteenth century; European philosophers worked to describe "the ideal man of Taste" (*l'homme de goût*) as a "product of careful cultivation" (Korsmeyer 44). Carolyn Korsmeyer writes, "A distinctive approach to perception, pleasure, beauty, and art emerges in eighteenth-century European philosophy. These writings make central the notion of Taste, conceived as a sensitivity to fine distinctions and an ability to discern beauty" (40).[35] In a society that used taste as a public indicator of status and cultivation, however, Franklin's discussions of restraint and physical labor seem remarkably out of place. Instead, Franklin fashions himself as the American Man of Taste, one who must create an individual identity through physical and intellectual labor made possible by properly-managed tastes. While discussions of flavor and pleasure would emphasize his physical and thus individual being, he cleverly removes this element of taste to allow him to represent a population. Thus Franklin's relationship with food also stands in for a national relationship; he

[34] Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1689) argues that all ideas are the result of the encounter or contemplation of a sensory experience. Beauty, therefore, cannot exist outside of one's sensory understanding of the world.

[35] Korsmeyer distinguishes between literal or sensory taste and aesthetic taste by using a lowercase "t" for sensory taste and a capital "T" for aesthetic Taste. In this passage, therefore, she is referring to aesthetic Taste (38).

generalizes his food experiences for a large reading audience by emphasizing abstract ideals rather than specific food items or individual sensory taste. As a result, his *Autobiography* provides rhetorical recipes for the creation of American citizens. The act of consumption, important for both physical and intellectual nourishment, becomes a central image of his writing, establishing not only a national character but also a pattern of national culinary discourse that will persist throughout the nineteenth century.

In the opening pages of his *Autobiography*, Franklin describes his lineage and childhood, paying particular emphasis to food. In an early account, he praises "the table" as a setting for intelligent conversation rather than a place for culinary discovery. He writes of his dining experiences that his father often invited friends to dine with him in order to converse on various topics and turn his children's "Attention to what was good, just, & prudent in the Conduct of Life;" as a result, "little or no Notice was ever taken of what related to the Victuals on the Table, whether it was well or ill drest, in or out of season, of good or bad flavor, preferable or inferior to this or that other thing of the kind" (35). In other words, according to Franklin, dining was an occasion for discourse, a chance to nourish the mind as well as the body. Over-attention to food would distract from intellectual pursuits. He continues:

> I was bro't up in such a perfect Inattention to those Matters as to be quite Indifferent what kind of Food was set before me; and so unobservant of it, that to this Day, if I am ask'd I can scarce tell, a few Hours after Dinner, what I din'd upon.—This has been a Convenience to me in travelling, where my Companions have been sometimes very unhappy for want of a suitable Gratification of their more delicate because better instructed Tastes and Appetites.—(35)

Again, Franklin's rhetoric echoes contemporary European philosophy. In "Of the Standard of Taste," (1757), David Hume writes, "A very delicate palate, on many occasions, may be a great inconvenience both to a man himself and to his friends: But a delicate taste of wit or beauty must always be a desirable quality; because it is the source of all the finest and most innocent enjoyments, of which human nature is susceptible" (220).[36] Developing a taste for intellect and virtue out of stimulating conversation is far more useful and practical, Franklin argues, than developing tastes that stimulate one's appetites and lead to dissatisfaction and delicacy.

Up to this point in his *Autobiography*, Franklin has dealt with the concept of inheritance, be it familial or intellectual (29-32). Franklin leads readers to believe that his legacy was his dispassionate relationship to food, yet his narrative provides obvious commentary on public food discourse by noting that his were not "delicate" tastes, informed through repeated consumption of refined foods associated with the British upper class. He also, however, does not call his tastes coarse, a quality traditionally associated with Native American foods or an American lower class. Instead he strategically avoids this binary by telling readers that he simply could not remember what he had eaten due to excellent conversation. This opening discussion is an assertion that American food culture need not be associated with other cultures--it does not need its inheritance, in other words--but is instead a complex emerging national tradition of its own. American tastes, he argues, are hardy and adaptable, rather than delicate or refined. These tastes allow Americans to thrive and progress in a new environment, as they are not hindered by history. One can develop a taste for virtue, he suggests, by ignoring bodily appetites.

[36] Hume permits the possibility of physical taste by discussing the need to cultivate one's palate: "Where the organs are so fine, as to allow nothing to escape them; and at the same time so exact, as to perceive every ingredient in the composition: This we call delicacy of taste, whether we employ these terms in the literal or metaphorical sense" (218).

Though Franklin overtly states that food is a mere concept, a vehicle for intelligent conversation, he continues throughout his text to rely on food as the basis for a variety of decisions and assertions concerning reason and intellect. Franklin is also making a case for the authority and potential of an American print culture. Strategic use of food experiences can heighten readers' understanding of print itself, and its role in negotiating the borders between public and private, nation and citizen. His inability to remember what was served perfectly demonstrates that the role of food in American culture is itself representational, mediating, and self-defining. He demonstrates that rational control of food representation allows the writer intimate access to the daily lives of his or her readers by controlling what they literally consume as well as the cultural meanings of their consumption.

A second legacy of Franklin's food discourse appears during his discussion of his vegetarianism. He suggests that one's tastes can be cultivated for particular purposes rather than reactions to sensory experiences. During his discussion of his reading and writing exercises, which he conducted before and after hours at the Printing House, he remarks that he encountered a text by Thomas Tryon (most likely his most famous, *The Way to Health, Long Life, and Happiness*, published in 1683) that recommended a vegetarian diet. Without further ado, Franklin writes, "I determined to go into it" (40). While Tryon gave various reasons for giving up meat, perhaps the most compelling and influential for Franklin was that he considered meat symbolic of luxury and waste which corrupted the intelligent mind as well as the body (Guerrini 35). Franklin, however, does not discuss the content of Tryon's text, nor does he offer an explanation as to why he chose this diet. He certainly does not remark that he preferred the physical taste of a vegetarian diet, or that consuming only vegetables was a pleasant experience. His discussion of his diet is entirely intellectual, abstracted from the body, thus framing taste is

similar terms. He notes that he made "greater Progress from that greater Clearness of Head & quicker Apprehension which usually attend Temperance in Eating & Drinking" (Franklin 40). According to Franklin, food, body, and mind are uniquely enhanced and connected by his vegetarian lifestyle, and these early studies contribute to his later success. He indicates that his life as a man of taste is made possible through his food choices, both in life and in print. As a result, he suggests to his readers that food choices can determine and indicate both individual and national identity.

When stuck on a ship that was forced to drop anchor during a storm with no food or water, Franklin's vegetarian principles were put to the test. Sensory and principled taste are at odds when he encounters the smell of pan-fried cod but believes that eating meat corrupts the soul and clouds the intellect. Yet it is intellect that allows him to choose a course of action. Often regarded as a humorous episode, Franklin's assertion that "So convenient a thing it is to be a *reasonable Creature*, since it enables one to find or make a Reason for everything one has a mind to do," is also a clever reversal of his earlier principles (56). In becoming a vegetarian, he applies the learned principle of ignoring appetite to achieve virtue and intellect. Yet here he playfully reverses this rule: when faced with a survival decision, one displays reason by ignoring one's principles in favor of one's appetites. In an even more relevant sense to his readers, this situation represents the choice between survival and personal or cultural identity, as they are only a few generations removed from such decisions. He also demonstrates the adaptability of American tastes by insisting on reason over dogma. Of course, he ate the fish, and for the rest of his life was an occasional vegetarian, choosing this lifestyle when he felt the need to practice or demonstrate self-discipline. Franklin's efforts to rationalize his food choices wrote into American food culture the ability to separate taste from representation**.** Franklin's ambivalent

relationship to vegetarianism throughout the rest of his *Autobiography* reinforces the complexity of nation-building and the role of the individual in this task. Committing to a particular diet out of principle or pleasure is less important, he suggests, than the ability to employ self-control when necessary.

Franklin's text contains a variety of food discussions, all of which support the principles he sets out early in his biography. He notes that abstaining from alcohol when working at Watt's printing house in London allowed him to work more efficiently and thus gain promotion and a reputation for his superior labor practices. He learns to cook his own food when he becomes a vegetarian, allowing him to eat more economically and spend money on intellectual pursuits. Food allows Franklin's readers to connect with him and thus gain greater power in the development of nationhood. Early in Part II, Franklin quotes a Proverb his father repeated to him as a boy: "'*Seest thou a Man diligent in his Calling, he shall stand before Kings, he shall not stand before mean Men*'" (92). He tells his readers that he continued to be industrious though "I did not think that I should ever literally stand before Kings, which however has since happened.--for I have stood before five, & even had the honour of sitting down with one, the King of Denmark, to Dinner" (93). This is yet another moment when Franklin uses food to represent American difference: while he can share a table with kings, his path was that of industry rather than inheritance, reinforcing the power of the American individual. Taste, as a textual aesthetic, can mediate between the experiential and the abstract, between the individual and the nation.

The final discussion of food that influences cookery writing during the republican period occurs early in Part II. In this section, Franklin sets out his Plan of Conduct: a reproducible set of instructions within the narrative of Franklin's life. In this way, his Plan is a recipe for his "bold and arduous Project of arriving at moral Perfection" (Franklin 94). It is designed to help him

overcome bodily desire, which he characterizes as a human flaw. He writes, "I wish'd to live without committing and Fault at any time; I would conquer all that either Natural Inclination, Custom, or Company might lead me into" (94). In other words, Franklin wishes to abstract himself from physical appetites or desires completely, to be a man governed only by principle. By placing these instructions within the context of his narrative, he embeds his recipe for a national body, both literal and symbolic. This reading is possible due to his preoccupation with food in the first part of his narrative. He deliberately engages food discourse to remind readers of the need to discipline bodily desires and physical tastes in order to construct themselves as American citizens, governed instead by principled, Enlightened tastes. Franklin implies that taste is adaptable, controllable, and valuable in the pursuit of a common interest.

This reading is possible because recipes are a rhetorical mode that does not always produce a food item and thus is not by definition equated with physical taste. Catherine Cotter's recipe (mentioned above) creates a "Presbyterian." Others instruct readers in the proper application of a medicine, or in the most efficient way to make soap or other household items. Even printed recipes, then, are divorced from taste; they also concern one's quality of life or indicate one's cultural tastes. Though Franklin never refers to his plan as a recipe in his text, his discussion contains the elements of a recipe narrative: he includes a list of ingredients (virtues) and his method for achieving them (instructions).[37] He even records his project, first in manuscript form, then in his *Autobiography*, indicating the progression of print from personal, manuscript culture to a potentially limitless audience.

Many of his virtues require the discipline of appetites. About temperance, the first virtue, he writes, "Eat not to Dulness. Drink not to Elevation" (95). About the fifth, frugality, he notes,

[37] See Colleen Cotter's discussion of the components of a recipe's narrative framework, "Claiming a Piece of the Pie"; see also my Introduction.

"Waste nothing" (96). His creation of himself as an American Man of Taste suggests that others should follow his advice. Prior to his instructions, Franklin gives a narrative overview of the significance of his project and the initial failures which led him to treat his project as a recipe rather than simply a goal: "I concluded at length, that the mere speculative Conviction that it was our Interest to be compleatly virtuous, was not sufficient to prevent our Slipping, and that the contrary Habits must be broken and goodness acquired and established, before we can have any Dependance on a steady uniform Rectitude of Conduct" (95). His use of first-person plural pronouns ("our," "our," and "we") suggest that Franklin intends to generalize his experiences to a wider reading public. By altering his narrative form with his Plan of Conduct from prose to a list of instructions, even including an illustration of his manuscript "recipe," and by including a direct address to his reading audience and, it seems, to himself, he equates his body with theirs, becoming part of their "we." Franklin structures his textual persona to progress from an individual voice of authority to the voice of one citizen among many, echoing the progress of the democracy his text is structured to represent. Accordingly, he uses far more food discourse in Part I in order to relate to his readers, which enables him to use such discourse to demonstrate the abstract ideals of nationalism later in his text.

Franklin's text provides an intriguing early study in the genre of food writing, not only in its discussion of food items but also in its representation of food discourse. His is a text about the body: the disruptiveness of the body, the discipline of the body, and the development of a national body. The prevalence of food through all editions and revisions of this text suggest a culture highly dependent on taste to shape and maintain virtuous citizens. Franklin recognized the value of connecting abstract tastes to their physical representations to demonstrate the concrete process of group identification that citizens of a new republic must undergo. He

emphasizes reason and self-control throughout his text, while his bodily appetites consistently threaten to disrupt his path to virtue. Yet Franklin treats this dilemma playfully, using it to stress print's disembodied transcendence of this issue, rather than seeking to fully solve this philosophical puzzle or actually control his appetites. He demonstrates the potential of print to create an imagined "body" separate from that of one's physical body; as such, he illustrates the process of creating a national identity through the intellectual management of individuals. He thus sets the stage for the evolution of taste in American print culture, particularly American cookbooks.

Amelia Simmons: Taste and the American Domestic Servant

Due in part to its clarity of purpose, *American Cookery* has been called America's "culinary declaration of independence" (Theophano, *Eat* 233). While this phrase suggests a food culture proclaiming its distinction from a gastronomic heritage, Simmons' text is in reality an assemblage of traditional British recipes--often copied from British cooking texts--and early American dishes. In other words, the recipes Simmons provides are in no way new to the American public; they are, on the contrary, quite traditional. What, then, is its declaration of independence? Janet Theophano writes that Simmons' cookbook "assert[s] a national identity" and "promotes the egalitarian ideals of a new republic" (233). By framing recipes in republican terms, Simmons argues for food's fundamental role in the development of a stable national identity and loyalty, and as such, the vital role of those who produce it.

American Cookery politicizes food choices at least as much as it discusses food's practical uses; it is immediately clear that Simmons has set out to write more than a set of cooking instructions. As a domestic servant in the late eighteenth century, Amelia Simmons

recognized the need for a household manual that was not at odds with its readers' knowledge of American life. Simmons emphasizes the role of the servant in her construction of an American identity and likens these audience members to the young nation, reappropriating the political rhetoric of "America" as "orphaned child" to demonstrate the role of the individual as a member of a national body. Her text, as the first cookbook written and published in America, is itself orphaned: though in form it follows a long-standing tradition of recipe books, she makes conscious efforts to re-frame common recipes in public terms of national participation, rather than private knowledge reserved for one's own family. She recognizes that her text must have a wide appeal while at the same time giving voice to the marginalized characters, like herself, whose labor creates and sustains the American culture she is documenting. Much like Franklin, who also revises the roles of inheritance and authority in his discussions of food, Simmons shapes American tastes by demonstrating that taste is not only a quality appreciated by the elite. Taste is not a cultivated appreciation of beauty, she argues, but a performance of character. Taste is thus based on egalitarian republican principles: all Americans, she suggests, have the capacity for virtue, made possible by participation in a public body through tasteful material choices and behavior.

Simmons does not suggest that America is classless; rather she emphasizes the potential of food discourse to transcend these physical boundaries. She writes that "many hints are suggested for the more general and universal knowledge of those females in this country, who by the loss of their parents, or other unfortunate circumstances, are reduced to the necessity of going into families in the line of domestics" (3). Though she describes the situation of domestics as "reduced to necessity," she counters this statement with a later assertion that "while those females who have parents, or brothers, or riches, to defend their indiscretions, … the orphan

must depend solely on *character*" (4, emphasis in original). She thus ascribes to the servant the virtue usually assumed of the wealthier employer, subtly suggesting that her American readers, even "Ladies of fashion and fortune," identify with the lower class (3). The "ruling taste of the age" in republican America is not solely the realm of the upper class, she suggests (3). Though she emphasizes class differences, she attempts "to bridge the gap between both classes with advice on cookery and decorum" (Theophano, *Eat* 237). Servants produce food, thus they should also shape food discourse.[38]

Her use of the term "orphan" also represents a material juncture in American food writing: women no longer need British food texts when they can write, publish, buy, and read their own.[39] While Simmons supports a break from British food traditions, she is careful not to promote culinary or cultural capriciousness. She describes the problem she, and the nation, must face:

> The world, and the fashion thereof, is so variable, that old people cannot accommodate themselves to the various changes and fashions which daily occur; they will adhere to the fashion of their day, and will not surrender their attachments to the good old way—while the young and the gay, bend and conform readily to the taste of the times, and fancy of the hour. (3)

Instead, she argues, the American orphan "must have an opinion and determination of her own" (3). Theophano notes, "Although she employs a slightly scornful tone … Simmons is nonetheless appealing to the vanities of the Ladies of Fashion by suggesting that being in step

[38] It is particularly intriguing that she chooses to publish a cookbook that engages food discourse when one considers that Simmons could not read or write; her cookbook was transcribed. This suggests that she understood the importance of print discourse as a means of disseminating ideas and skills to a wide reading public.

[39] Theophano notes that *American Cookery* "is the first [cookbook] to present both adaptations of English recipes *and* innovative recipes using New World ingredients" (*Eat* 234).

with the times is an indication of those who are willing to accept the new social order of egalitarianism" *(Eat* 241). In other words, Simmons suggests, tastes are not at odds with an egalitarian regime; tasteful American behavior is egalitarian behavior. All Americans are orphans, she argues; as such, all must participate in the powerful task of nation-building that lies before them.

She concludes her Preface by stating that it is "imminently important" for the American orphan that "every action, very word, every thought, be regulated by the strictest purity" (4). Her use of "orphan" to indicate both working class and American suggests that the future of one depends on the other. Proper performance of her recipes, depicted here as guides to virtuous tastes, will ensure virtuous behavior. If we understand her domestic manual as a guide to these behaviors, she thus suggests that a domestic print culture possesses the unique ability to regulate one's character by regulating the body, a concept developed previously by Benjamin Franklin during his culinary experiments with vegetarianism and temperance. Like Franklin, Simmons rejects the notion that American character is based on lineage and heritage, be it familial or culinary heritage. Instead, she suggests that one's character is dependent on the consumption of proper foods and print sources, and that American character is thus a product of an educated domestic readership.

As the author of the first American cookbook, Simmons is the first to engage the emerging American discourse of taste in actual recipes. Her recipes demonstrate both the intellectual and the physical meanings of taste. Several of Simmons' recipes make national claims: her collection contains the first published recipes using cornmeal (or "Indian meal"), pearlash (a chemical leavener), and custard-based pumpkin pie baked in a pastry crust (though this recipe had national symbolism thrust upon it later) (Wilson 21). Simmons includes three

recipes for "A Nice Indian Pudding" while other wheat-based puddings only receive one recipe each. She also places recipes including cornmeal such as "Johny Cakes" and "Indian slapjacks" ahead of similar recipes using flour (if the recipes require both, she lists "Indian meal" ahead of flour in her instructions), again using the properties of print to regulate familiar recipes in terms of national identity and to therefore establish taste as subject to cultural and individual control (Simmons 26). While she does include many familiar British recipes, only slightly adapted for American ingredients, she renames these recipes in light of their national significance, such as "Election Cake" and "Independence Cake" (Theophano, *Eat* 235). Through her use of taste as a print aesthetic, Simmons reinvigorates recipes that readers might otherwise recognize as belonging to "Old World" traditions.

Simmons also engages taste on a literal level. Several of her recipes use pearlash, a chemical leavener that was a relatively new American cooking technology and replaced traditional natural leaveners such as eggs and yeast (Wilson 22). Simmons' use of pearlash served both symbolic and utilitarian purposes: while it was useful and faster than previous leaveners, not requiring the rising time of yeast or the careful beating of eggs, it also represented American innovation and difference from European cooking. There was, however, a debate regarding the flavor of this item: because it was known to leave behind a rather metallic aftertaste, some cooks would not use it. Mary Randolph, a famous cook and entertainer from Virginia, notably used it in only one of her two recipes for Ginger Bread in *The Virginia Housewife* (1824): she called that recipe "Plebian Ginger Bread." To Randolph, the use of a chemical leavener indicated one's cultural and economic status. To forsake flavor for ease suggests the uncultivated tastes of the lower class. Simmons, however, disregards the issue of flavor, focusing instead on form and representation. Chemical leaveners allow even

inexperienced cooks to create dishes that, in appearance at least, are comparable to those with a long heritage of culinary education (like Randolph). The act of recording and publishing these recipes for an American audience, thus allowing everyone equal access to culinary education, was more important than the taste or even the origin of the recipes themselves. Simmons significantly recasts the dishes that were part of the daily American experience as a method of public participation. Consumption thus became an act of survival and self-definition. Simmons demonstrates a food discourse based on an egalitarian rhetoric of taste, in which both reading and eating were performative acts of American identity.

By removing taste from the recipe and instead defining it as a performance of virtuous character, Simmons devalues class distinctions as a social ordering system. Though Simmons inverts the customary relationship of mistress and servant in her text by giving herself, the marginal servant, the voice of authority, this inversion does not seek to reify or subvert traditional class boundaries. She instead asserts that as the young nation produces servants, likewise these servants, in print, produce the nation. In effect, Simmons implies that all American citizens are servants to the greater good of building and preserving the integrity of the new republic. Theophano remarks, "Not unlike her country, the borders she negotiated were those of class, generation, lineage, and authority" (236). Enlightenment philosophies of public print discourse allow Simmons to make claims regarding national character that apply to all Americans. As a result, Simmons produces a representation of American tastes based on complicated negotiations of class, authority, and citizenship.

Republican Motherhood and the Domestic Intellectual

Early American women's participation in the discursive project of elevating eating to an intellectual pursuit while still illustrating in physical detail the daily realities of the kitchen was particularly republican in its origins and goals. Nina Baym writes that the emerging public sphere of print "enables women to imagine themselves out of their bodies" (*Feminism* 107). In other words, the capacities of women's minds were not determined by their bodies, a principle which extended to women's labor in the home. Child rearing, for example, "could be defined in different ways: It could be mere physical nurture, or it might be far more intellectual work" (108). Printed domestic manuals often combined these ideologies, characterizing the woman's role as an intellectual nurturer; in other words, the ideal republican mother, a term coined by Linda Kerber to express the public domesticity common during the republican era. Baym suggests that men participated in the physical work of building the nation, while leaving women "the various tasks involved in the ideological acculturation of citizenry." Women, in response to the European Man of Taste as described by philosophers such as David Hume, used public domestic writing to participate in the development of a national "taste" and thus a system by which Americans would come to identify themselves. Though Franklin to some extent led the charge, it was women, via domestic print discourse, who performed much of the labor, both physical and intellectual.

Though the ideology of the republican mother emerged after the Revolution, it continued to evolve and grow in popularity well into the nineteenth century. Laura Romero suggests that it is "the precursor to domesticity," often defined as the relegation of women's authority to the "private" sphere (14). Based on "the Enlightenment tenet that youth was particularly susceptible to both good and bad influences," republican mothers were charged with educating young Americans, particularly young boys, who would grow into political leaders. These women thus

"exercised a determining power over the fate of the Republic" and thus required a more complete education of their own. Civic education became an important topic, as a republican government required a highly literate and intellectually sophisticated society. Progressive thinkers such as Judith Sargent Murray, Mercy Otis Warren, and Benjamin Rush began to question women's traditional educations, inquiring as to how traditional education in needlework and fashion were to create responsible and intelligent citizens. Murray's suggested course of study was to be taught by mothers in the home and included writing and conversational skills, pronouncing French, reading history, and some geography and astronomy. Rush's plan included the same, and added some science, which he believed was important so that women could better manage their (middle- to upper-class) kitchens, filled with servants and, therefore, "vice or ill-manners" (Kerber, *Women* 213).[40] Those who suggested plans for women's educations had to tread lightly, blending tradition with new plans for education. Thus motherhood was the role assigned with the responsibility of ensuring the virtue of the citizens of the Republic, virtue on which the "social control" this new Republic was based (200). It became the job of American cookbooks and domestic manuals to educate women for this role.

As a result of expansion and improvements in print technology, American cookbook production began to increase. Though several British cookbooks remained popular in America during the first decades of the nineteenth-century, such as Elizabeth Raffald's *Experienced Housekeeper* (1769) and Maria Rundell's *New System of Domestic Cookery* (1807), they now had to compete with American-authored texts that not only used more familiar ingredients and techniques, but were written for American readers whose domestic roles were directly linked to

[40] Since the advent of the genre, advice literature has discussed the "servant problem," or the lack of trained, educated, and loyal domestic servants. This could also be viewed as a means of policing class boundaries and with them, a class-based sense of power and virtue.

their new national identity. Most importantly, however, American texts provided the domestic education that many British texts took for granted. They answered the call for a revised women's education by using Enlightenment rhetoric to describe women's daily activities; thus by reading and cooking, they suggested, women could become active citizens of a new republic.

Republican motherhood promised not only a standard of national character, but also the future economic success of the nation. Women's civic role was increasingly, albeit indirectly, an economic one, linking the individual or familial body to the concept of a national body. Sarah Robbins notes that in the early nineteenth century, didactic literature or the "domestic literacy narrative" rose in significance as reading promised "to promote not only familial but national well being" ("Future" 562). Nancy Cott argues that republican motherhood evolved in conjunction with print discourse and the marketplace's increasing demand for domestic education.[41] Economically, "motherhood helped reunite the 'state and family,' which had begun to diverge during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries with the growth of industrial capitalism" (Robbins, "Future" 565). Linda Kerber writes that Republican Motherhood merged the preindustrial, private domestic ideology of womanhood with the new public domain of citizenship and individual political responsibility.[42] Authors such as Lydia Maria Child and Catherine Maria Sedgwick revised traditional British didactic literature for an American audience and, in particular, for middle-class American women. This dissertation argues that discourses of taste in domestic writing allow women both the natural and cultural capital to define their national, class, and gender identities, and to promote behavioral standards in others. While didactic literature in Robbins' argument tends to be more narrative than traditional cookbooks audiences might be familiar with today, it is important to remember that cookbooks

[41] See *The Bonds of Womanhood*, 1997 Preface and Chapter 2.
[42] See Linda Kerber, *Women of the Republic: Intellect and Ideology in Revolutionary America* (1980).

were a significant component of an emerging print culture and as such, were often far complex creations than we might initially assume. Amelia Simmons' *American Cookery,* for example, though a short text,[43] contains a substantial introduction that makes clear its intended cultural contribution—to destabilize class boundaries by suggesting that taste is not a class marker but a mechanism for defining an egalitarian nation. Lydia Maria Child, on the other hand, writes a cookbook that is in essence a collection of domestic treatises, preceeded by a short group of recipes. That this cookbook was one of the most popular cooking texts in early antebellum America suggests women's demand for recipes and domestic intellectual stimulation; furthermore, it suggests that women did not view these genres as incongruous.

While republican discourse suggested that women played a civic role in the moral and intellectual behaviors of American youth, as the nineteenth century progressed, "writers increasingly enunciated women as the sole repository of national virtue" (Romero 15, emphasis in original). From this representation comes the ideology of Victorian domesticity or the "true woman." While republican motherhood promoted a more secular education based on Enlightenment intellectual philosophies, Victorian motherhood embraced the Protestant evangelical rhetoric of moral conversion and salvation. Lydia Maria Child, whose domestic advice writing was published primarily in the 1820s and 30s, was uniquely positioned between these models.

Lydia Maria Child: A Transitional Figure

[43] Sandra Sherman notes that *American Cookery*'s length suggests "it was written for women who own at least one cookbook already and are interested in native cuisine" (xxxv). While this may be true of some readers, her emphasis on the servant or working class suggests that perhaps her book was also intended as their first, inexpensive foray into the capitalist marketplace.

As the country transitioned into the Jacksonian era in the late 1820s and early 1830s, domestic writing reflected evolving republican values and citizenship roles. Sara Evans notes that society became more differentiated by class as a result of expansion and industrialization, and thus women's patterns of daily life varied significantly. While domestic duties of women on the frontier continued to resemble those of their colonial predecessors, women in cities experienced a variety of disparate economic situations: "opportunities for some, poverty for others, and disruption to all" (Evans 60). Cookbooks demonstrated an increased sense of the differing financial and environmental factors affecting individual families. Most cookbooks into the early 1830s maintained the rhetoric of the enlightened, virtuous republican and combined it with the realities of economic hardship, regional distinctions, and class-consciousness. While Franklin and Simmons suggested the equalizing function of the representation of taste in print, writers such as Lydia Maria Child, author of *The Frugal Housewife* (1829), used it to adapt republican values in response to emerging class conditions.

Increased geographical and social mobility disturbed the oral and manuscript culture that composed the majority of domestic advice leading up to the nineteenth century. These cultures required physical proximity at a time when the nation's emphasis had shifted to expansion. Even existing cookbooks had to be adapted by readers to suit their local agricultural and economic situations. Moreover, domesticity was also evolving due to its increased presence in print documents. Carolyn Karcher writes, "While domesticity was being redefined as an art that demanded concerted study, increasing geographical mobility was carrying young wives away from the mothers and grandmothers on whom they had traditionally relied for guidance in running a household and bringing up children. To fill the breach, a new genre emerged: the domestic advice book" (127). Though Simmons wrote the first American cookbook, hers was not

directed to an emerging middle class, nor were management and motherhood part of her (stated) working class experience, and thus she could not perform the function of educating women to be republican middle-class wives and mothers.

Lydia Maria Child viewed society's shift away from the home as a detriment to American society, because young women were not being properly educated as to household duties that would be theirs when they inevitably married and bore children. Increased print, industry, and geographical mobility introduced a growing variety of leisure and consumer options available to those wealthy enough to afford them; those who were not, however, desired them as public indicators of status. Child notes specifically that young single women who would likely not marry into a life of leisure were still provided this lifestyle by their parents, who argued that they would have much time for domestic drudgery later in life (Child 95). Child responded by arguing that not only were these parents training their daughters in unsuitable tastes rather than necessary domestic skills, but they were also teaching them that happiness required money: "how many affectionate dispositions have been trained into heartlessness, by being taught that the indulgence of indolence and vanity were necessary to their happiness." Yet her discussion of the inevitability, even the necessity, of marriage was still decidedly tied to republican values of rational distribution of finances; she has often been referred to as notably "Franklinian" in her discussions of frugality.[44] She writes that women can control a family's financial status by demonstrating to husbands and fathers that "neatness, good taste, and gentility" do not require great expense (6). Her discussions of domesticity focus primarily on class and finances, particularly for those experiencing economic hardship. Child's text demonstrates the economic

[44] She even includes one of Franklin's aphorisms, "A fat kitchen maketh a lean will," as an epigraph on her title page.

function of the republican mother rather than the emotional form of domesticity often associated with antebellum Victorianism.

Victorian womanhood, or "true womanhood," emerged to address the growing separation of gendered spheres of activity. This philosophy of women's behavior, developed by writers such as Sarah Josepha Hale and Catherine Beecher, emphasized the primacy of gender distinctions over explicit considerations of class or race. Their conception of womanhood, however, was implicitly gendered as it gave power to the middle class, shifting republican motherhood's emphasis on women's economic roles to their emotional roles in the home (Kleinberg 35). It promoted middle-class domestic values as necessary to the salvation of the individual and the spiritual health of the nation. This sentimental view of women's roles removed the belief that a gendered body did not determine a woman's intellectual capacity; in fact, this philosophy of gendered spheres promoted a double standard in both intellectual and moral behavior. Finally, it defined consumption, both physical and material, in terms of an object's moral value, rather than its cost or effect on a family budget. It is this quality in particular that distinguished Child from her Victorian counterparts, and that drew the most criticism of her popular *Frugal Housewife.*[45]

Child wrote *The Frugal Housewife* in response to her experience of the economic recession of the 1820s. She avoids the "sentimentalization" of the home and seeks to counsel women financially rather than to "reinforce terms of respectability" (Kilcup 187). Many families struggled as a result of financial losses; Child blamed the effects of the recession on a lack of proper domestic education, and set out to restore faith in domestic roles based on principles

[45] Child is often grouped with Victorian writers such as Beecher and Hale, as her work spans the mid-nineteenth century. Though even her contemporary reviewers often place her work in a moral context, her *Frugal Housewife* is decidedly republican in its content and rhetoric, specifically its overt emphasis on women's role in preserving the economic future of the nation.

advanced by Franklin and Simmons: industry, frugality, self-control, and participation in a national body. Several cookbooks published in the 1820s and 30s emphasized "republican fare," working to cultivate tastes that embodied America's founding principles, and even more importantly, advising women of all economic backgrounds to participate in their domestic educations by evaluating and adapting these values to their individual situations through critical reflection.

Child initially encountered hesitation on the part of publishers, who feared that her text would not be competitive in what they considered a saturated domestic market (Karcher, *First* 127). She insisted, however, that hers filled a need not met by any cookbooks currently on the market. Her firm rhetorical stance indicates this insistence. Instead of the standard apology for imposing one's private concerns on the reading public, Child writes this: "The writer has no apology to offer for this cheap little book of economical hints, except her deep conviction that such a book is needed. … The information conveyed is of a common kind; but it is such as the majority of young housekeepers do not possess, and such as they cannot obtain from cookery books" (6). She continues pointedly: "Books of this kind have usually been written for the wealthy: I have written for the poor." In this way, she distinguished herself even from predecessors like Amelia Simmons who, though poor and writing for domestic servants, records dishes they might prepare in upper-class homes. Her text is for the poor; the dishes are not. Child, meanwhile, writes to women who are unlikely to employ or become servants; though she claims she is writing for the poor, her audience is more likely an emerging middle-class, suggested by her emphasis on motherhood and marriage "independent of historical circumstances or the economic conditions in which a woman came to motherhood" (Evans 85), as well as her continued discussions of those who have "moderate fortunes." The working class,

on the other hand, often viewed motherhood as "a condition of extreme jeopardy at worst, and extreme hardship at best" (85). Working-class women demonstrated little use for the doctrine of middle-class domesticity—many were unmarried and worked for wages outside of the home--behaviors which further solidified their inferior position on the minds of domestic authorities. Child writes instead to fortify middle-class identity by emphasizing economy in taste—both physical and material consumption—that will preserve a nation of virtuous citizens. She argues not for equality in class, but equality in contentment with one's standard of living. One's tastes, then, must be consistent with one's economic station; the demonstration of tastes outside of one's financial capabilities leads to the gradual decay of the republic (Child 99).

American tastes, in other words, should be for principles of living, rather than for material objects or foodstuffs, a position Victorian domestic writers disagree with, as they emphasize materiality as a path to morality. Child promotes the idea that one should choose quality in order to live comfortably on any amount of income. Economy does not mean deprivation of necessities or developing a taste for inferior ingredients, provided that one's label of "inferior" or "superior" is rationally, rather than socially, applied. For example, she claims that it is better to go without coffee than to drink an inferior beverage. She does give several recipes for coffee substitutes, however, recognizing that some readers may not agree with her. She is keenly aware of the differing tastes developing in the nation, and recognizes that these tastes must be regulated in terms of reasoned assessment of one's economic status. She argues against tastes for rich foods, associated with the public display of wealth (whether or not this indicates the private reality of one's finances) while she allows for greater variety in one's choice of economical options. Perhaps this is because she realizes that in order for readers not to be "ashamed of economy," they must understand it as being as varied in its options and applicability

as wealth. In fact, she implies, one has more options when living economically because one is not always trying to keep up with the latest trend among a narrow wealthy class.

An emphasis on rational consideration and control over one's circumstance and preference characterizes republican cooking texts of the early nineteenth century. The anonymous author of *The Cook Not Mad, or Rational Cookery*, published in 1830 in Watertown, New York, describes "Good *republican dishes*" as "proper to fill an every day bill of fare, from the condition of the poorest family to the richest individual" (iii, emphasis in original). Recipes are merely "a basis to be followed," a method one can adapt "according to taste and circumstances" (v). By asking readers to evaluate their tastes, the author is acknowledging the ethos of republican individualism, as well as the emerging class differences resulting from increased industry outside of the home. N.K.M. Lee, author of *The Cook's Own Book* (1832), likewise writes, "In domestic management, as in education, so much must depend on the particular circumstances of every case, that it is impossible to lay down a system which can be generally applicable. The immediate plan of every family must be adapted to its own peculiar situation, and can only result from the good sense and early good habits of the parties, acting upon general rational principles" (Lee vii). Though Lee's text was written for a more upper-class audience, her advice remains the same: both authors leave the process of adaptation to the reason of their female readers, rather than appealing to their sentiment or need for sensual gratification. Taste represents rational decisions based on economically-appropriate standards of quality, a function of proper intellectual domestic education.

Child demonstrates the same optimism Simmons expressed in the ability of domestic education to elevate and maintain a virtuous nation; however, she also argues that improper education can in turn destroy that nation. In "Education of Daughters," Child remarks "In tracing

evils of any kind, which exist in society, we must, after all, be brought up against the great cause of all mischief--*mismanagement in education*" (94, emphasis in original). She later suggests in a section titled "Travelling and Public Amusements," to "let any reflecting mind inquire how decay has begun in all republics, and let them calmly ask whether we are in no danger, in departing thus rapidly from the simplicity and industry of our forefathers" (99). She continues, planting seeds of awareness: "Nations do not plunge *at once* into ruin--…the causes which bring about the final blow, are scarcely perceptible in the beginning." She then delivers her final blow, the conclusion to her arguments for republican tastes in the home: "A republic without industry, economy, and integrity, is Sampson shorn of his locks. A luxurious and idle *republic*! Look at the phrase!--The words were never made to be married together; everybody sees it would be death to one of them." Her text, she writes, will provide the domestic education that is severely lacking in American society, and which perpetuates many of its social and financial ills.

Many Americans, however, believed that domestic education was beneath them, following a European model of the aesthetic and delicate Man of Taste. They demonstrate desired class affiliations through performance of wealth and leisure and ignoring the skills required of women in a domestic role. N.K.M. Lee incorporates the rhetoric of the "Romantic gourmand" who works to distinguish even his physical palate from his instinctual appetites (Gigante 1), noting that "The subject of cookery is thought by too many women to be below their attention … If cookery is worth studying, as a sensual gratification, it is surely much more so as a means of securing one of the greatest of human blessings--good health (Lee viii). Despite an upper-class audience, Lee rejects disembodied aesthetic judgment and instead suggests the economic function of proper diet in maintaining good health: cooking to please one's sensual tastes can, in fact, create health problems such as dyspepsia that will in turn drain one's income.

Child also addresses the tastes of wealthier Americans, noting that it is certainly their right to spend as they please, though she remarks that "they copy all the foolish and extravagant caprice of European fashion, without considering that we have not their laws if inheritance among us; and the frequent changes of policy render property far more precarious here than in the old world" (89). She even subtly suggests that they are not fully committed to the American project. Though their "foolish" tastes at least support the capitalist system, Child warns that it is unwise for middle-class Americans to assume that copying their tastes will change one's economic status for the better; it will rather lead to both individual and national decay.

Sarah Josepha Hale criticized Child primarily for her lack of distinction of familial roles in the project of saving money: Hale argued that concern with money was a masculine realm, while Child argued throughout her text that every member of the family should be educated as to their role in preserving the family's financial well-being. For example, Child writes, "In early childhood, you lay the foundation of poverty or riches, in the habits you give your children. Teach them to save everything,--not for their *own* use, for that would make them selfish--but for *some* use. Teach them to share with their playmates; but never allow them to *destroy* anything" (6-7, emphasis in original). Child's example of early economic education is also an allegory for the financial needs of a democracy, or the need to spread not only wealth, but the responsibility for wealth, among the people, rather than allowing it to be managed by an elite few. Yet Hale's very criticism betrays the distinction between the two competing ideologies of womanhood during the antebellum years, and their distinct treatments of distinctions in class and taste. As Karcher writes, "Hale was countering advice suited to the poor with a cultural ideal of 'true womanhood' applicable only to the prosperous" (133). Prosperity, however, also had a regional dimension during the early antebellum period. Hale's audience was still primarily northeastern;

in the southern states, wealth often indicated a more varied cuisine based on global ingredients, spices, and cooking techniques. Moreover, domestic management, so important to both Child and Hale, was necessary among members of the planted class to maintain one's home and one's status, both of which rested on the skilled labor of slaves.

The Virginia Housewife: A Regional Variation on Republican Motherhood

On the title page of my library copy of Mary Ryan's *Empire of the Mother: American Writing about Domesticity, 1830-1860* (1982), an anonymous reader has scrawled under its subtitle, "New England only." This reader's likely disgruntlement with a misleading title indicates a common theme in domestic scholarship. The majority of texts were published in the northeast, and these texts made strong claims to national identity. Simmons and Child both emphasize the creation of a virtuous national body in their domestic advice. As a result, other texts are often ignored or immediately discussed as regional. Mary Randolph's *Virginia Housewife* is one such text. Often called the first southern cookbook, her text has far more in common with Child's emphasis on republican motherhood than later (particularly post-war) southern texts, for which a broad understanding of "the South" as a cohesive region plays an important role. Though the cuisine it describes is somewhat different from its northern counterparts, its emphasis on domestic management—specifically the "Treasury"—is decidedly republican.

The Virginia Housewife, published in 1824 and going through nineteen printings throughout the antebellum period, begins a loose trilogy of *Housewife* texts, all published by

southern women in several states.[46] Unlike Amelia Simmons' *American Cookery*, which contained primarily English and New England traditions, Randolph's text reflected French and southern (and as such, somewhat global) cuisines. While, as Karen Hess notes, Randolph was known for her distinction as a cook and hostess at the time Simmons' text was published, even her records of cooking in the early republic reflect a regional cuisine far more differentiated from the old English cuisine than Simmons'. Yet we must not mistake her title as an indication of broad regional associations. Randolph was attempting to chronicle the cuisine she had become famous for preparing, a cuisine that defined her lineage from a prominent early American family. "Virginia" indicates an association with America's origins and current economic prosperity. As the North began to move away from luxury in favor of religious stoicism and reform, Virginia retained its place as the largest producer, particularly of tobacco and other profitable exports, and was therefore the center of American aristocracy. According to Karen Hess, Randolph's lineage and social circles suggest that "nobody was more qualified … to record the cookery of Virginia," (Hess, *Virginia* xii). Subjective judgments aside, Randoph's family and history do indicate that the access to print technology in the South, as well as the ownership of regional cuisines, belonged almost solely to an aristocracy, rather than the middle class of northeaster domestic writing. The emphasis placed on Randolph's reputation for entertaining is also an indicator of class status, as women were expected to have time, skill, and money to cater to their guests' tastes (Edwards 36).

Mary Randolph was part of a dynasty of Virginia elite. She was born to Anne Cary Randolph and Thomas Mann Randolph in 1762, and married political figure David Meade

[46] Her title might be a reference to E. Smith's *The Compleat Housewife*, the first cookbook published on American soil, in 1742 by Williamsburg printer William Parks. The other Housewife texts, Lettice Bryan's *Kentucky Housewife* (1839) and Sarah Rutledge's *Carolina Housewife* (1847) are discussed in Chapter 3.

Randolph in 1782. They shared what Hess refers to as "an imposing home" in Richmond, Virginia, which they named Moldavia, and became known for their lavish entertaining and hospitality (Hess, *Virginia* xi). David Randolph, however, was removed from his appointed office of United States marshal in 1802 due to his strong federalist views, and the couple's finances severely declined. By 1808, they had lost their home, and the Richmond Virginia Gazette and General Advertiser announced that Mary Randolph was opening a boardinghouse. Despite their decline in social position, however, her food was still highly regarded. In 1819, the Randolphs moved to Washington, D.C., where Mary Randolph began to write *The Virginia Housewife*, and where the first edition was published.

Randolph begins her Preface by explaining her early challenge as a housewife: finding clear and accessible culinary instruction. She writes,

> The difficulties I encountered when I first entered on the duties of a housekeeping life, from the want of book sufficiently clear and concise to impart knowledge to a Tyro, compelled me to study the subject, and by actual experiment to reduce every thing in the culinary line, to proper weights and measures. This method I found to not only diminish the necessary attention and labor, but to be also economical: for, when the ingredients employed were given in just proportions, the article made was always equally good. (Randolph ix)

This cookbook was actually published in 1824, prior to Child's *Frugal Housewif*e in 1829, and the recipes it records likely have a long manuscript history prior to being published in their current form. Randolph frames them, however, in the language of republican motherhood: its Enlightenment emphasis on the potential of an individual's intellect through study and experimentation, as well as its unabashed discussion of household economy, leads to the

conclusion that this is not a Victorian text that will explicitly emphasize spirituality and morality. Instead, like Child's *Frugal Housewife*, it emphasizes a more secular sense of national virtue. Randolph writes that moral sons and virtuous daughters are produced "if the mother shall have performed the duties of a parent in the superintendence of their education" (12), a clearly republican domestic sentiment. In fact, Randolph carefully compares the management of a home to the federal government, not an insignificant comparison as her husband was forced to leave his political career due to his federalism. She writes,

> The government of a family, bears a Lilliputian resemblance to the government of a nation. The contents of the Treasury must be known, and great care taken to keep the expenditures from being equal to the receipts. A regular system must be introduced into each department, which may be modified until matured, and should then pass into an inviolable law. (Randolph ix)

Randolph consistently emphasizes order, method, and frugality on the part of the woman throughout her preface and introduction. This suggests three related conclusions. First, it suggests the role of the home in the education of a national citizenry, an indication of the dominant ideologies of republican motherhood common in the 1820s, specifically in its discussion of financial management. Second, as Virginia was the home of many famous American political families, such as Jefferson and Washington, it demonstrates Randolph's close connection to her geographical and symbolic place. Third, and most important for this chapter, it is an early indication of an emergent southern womanhood: it emphasizes the woman acting as an individual manager of the home economy, her ability to speak publicly as she tended to reinforce the dominant economic and labor ideologies, and her particular role in regulating domestic law and practice.

Mary Randolph varies the republican mother described by Lydia Maria Child. While Child's version presided over the domestic space and her children's civic educations, she also performed many or all of the household domestic tasks on her own. Randolph's version, however, refers to the domestic management of "slaves or hired servants" (12). This indicates both class and regional differences, though the domestic duties and their significance—to preserve familial and national well-being and to indicate appropriate social standing—are the same. While Mary Randolph does not mention her own slaves in her cookbook, it is likely due to her social standing and history that much of the actual cooking in her home was performed by slave labor.[47] The recipes recorded in her text, in which Hess notes African and Caribbean influences, were almost certainly gleaned from African American cooks. One's status as a southern lady, and thus a capable hostess and entertainer, was determined in part by the quality of slave labor. Rebecca Sharpless notes that many enslaved cooks "had high monetary value, indicating their importance to their owners" (4). That Randolph was so well known for her abilities indicates skillful cooks as well as her skills in domestic management, an area she greatly expounds upon in her introductory statements.

Randolph's emphasis on printed domestic texts also suggests that she had little domestic training prior to her marriage and looked to books as her sole means of instruction. As Katharine E. Harbury points out in *Colonial Virginia's Cooking Dynasty*, however, Randolph likely received a very traditional domestic education from her wealthy planter family in colonial tidewater Virginia. Her comment that her domestic education was "in want of books sufficiently clear and concise" is most likely a fabrication or, at best, an exaggeration of her experience intended to engage her audience. Laura Edwards notes that young married women were often

[47] In her brief history of southern domestic slave labor, Rebecca Sharpless relies heavily on accounts of Virginia homes, lending further support to the likelihood of slave labor in the Randolph's Moldavia.

quite unprepared for the management position of overseeing a household of domestic slaves as these women had received little training in basic domestic skills (21). While Randolph advises readers to "every morning examine minutely the different departments of her household" in order to "detect errors in their infant state," without proper domestic education these women would not know what constituted an error. This lack of domestic knowledge often resulted in a lack of authority and difficult relations with slaves who were "older and more skilled" (Edwards 21). Randolph refers to "servants" throughout her introduction, advising readers--based on her authority as a lady of Virginia and by definition a "proverbially good manager"—not to "expect slaves or hired servants to be more attention to our interest than we ourselves are" (12). As such, the labor of slaves will only match the skills of the mistress; however, skillful labor on the part of slaves indicates to guests the skills of the mistress. When her husband brings a friend to dinner—a common trope in the *Housewife* cookbooks, and indeed, many antebellum cookbooks—the meal slaves prepare will reflect her, and by extension her husband's, tastes and status.

Unlike Simmons and Child, Randolph does not use "taste" to refer to egalitarian or quality standards. She mentions taste only in her recipes, using it in two ways. First, she advises readers throughout her text to season to taste; in the context of slave labor, she might read the recipe to the cook who would season based on her own tastes, or a more involved mistress might taste the final product and recommended seasonings to the cook. Randolph also uses taste as an inherent quality in raw foods, advising readers to cook a vegetable, for example, until the bitter taste is gone. As I will discuss in depth in the Chapter 3, antebellum cookbooks published in southern states rarely engage taste as a cultural function; they tend to rely entirely on discussions of physical taste. This is likely a result of the separation of physical labor and those whose tastes it represents. Because taste of the final dish served is an indication of status and skill, it was

important for a mistress to understand taste; the act of cooking, however, was rarely her own.

As the decrease in her financial status did not lower her esteem as a hostess, however, she demonstrates the possibilities of print to transcend these social boundaries by representing one's former tastes and skills. The power of the printed word to construct a national body is key to her understanding to the role of print within the home. It can be difficult to read this text without imposing upon it a system of characteristic southern interpretations. Historians such as Carol Fisher and Janice Longone have referred to it as the first southern cookbook as well as the first regional cookbook. While these designations are not geographically incorrect, they immediately cause many readers to disengage Randolph's text from its national influences.

Each author discussed in this chapter creates a nation at work in building and defining itself through its physical and material tastes, while at the same time emphasizing the philosophical implications of those choices. These authors explore and break down familiar power and class struggles by the exchange of authorship their texts invite. Taste as a form of intellectual control over one's physical circumstances allows Franklin to prescribe a means of achieving a unified national character. By revising European discussions of taste as form of aesthetic judgment and performance, Franklin develops an American taste aesthetic that influences discussions of American character, politics, education, even cookery. By suggesting the role of domestic labor in taste formation, Simmons questions and revises the role of class as a means of determining social opportunity in a new egalitarian regime. Child likewise discusses class not as a fixed category but as an impermanent state dependent upon the decisions of the government and marketplace. She advises readers that all members of a family unit must learn to live frugality on whatever income allowed them; material performance of class-based desires

(rather than realities) can lead to the decay of not only the nuclear family, but the national family. Rational management of one's tastes is the key, according to Simmons and Child, of America's success as a young nation. Finally, Randolph indicates an emerging form of domesticity based on slave labor and domestic management, and indicates an elaborate food culture at odds with northeastern frugality. Her use of taste, likewise, is primarily physical, suggesting its function as a means of managing domestic labor to properly indicate one's social standing. Yet her discussion of women's roles as intellectual managers is similar to her northern counterparts.

Together, these early food writers demonstrate that taste as a cultural discourse is detached from its physical meaning even when applied to cookery and consumption. Taste, as a textual aesthetic, can mediate between the experiential and the abstract, between the individual and the nation. Each of these authors empowers readers through food discourse by suggesting that their actions have the ability to differentiate and define their nation.

Chapter 2

Controlled Tastes: Evangelical Domesticity and Moral Consumption in Victorian America

In 1839, *Godey's Lady's Book* editor Sarah Josepha Hale published her first cookbook, *The Good Housekeeper, or The Way to Live Well and To Be Well While We Live*. From her established position of influence in Victorian society, Hale provided readers with a compendium of recipes intended to improve the health of the nation, and by extension the global opinion of American citizens. Her emphasis on health, however, though ostensibly a discussion of the nutritional needs of the physical body, is couched in typical Victorian terms of "rational and Christian views on domestic economy," or the health of the mind and spirit (*Good* "Preface"). Domestic writers such as Hale believe the root of all social evils is the uncontrolled appetite. In the following discussion of the consumption of fruit, Hale uses biblical arguments to support many of her claims, and like many Victorian women writers, seems particularly intrigued by the rhetorical possibilities of Genesis. In this passage, Hale develops a connection between modern appetites and original sin:

> Fruits were the first diet allowed man; and it seems that the Eden taste still lingers in our race, for in childhood there is no food so eagerly sought and relished. But nothing which earth produces has escaped the curse, or rather mankind, by the excitement and indulgence of a depraved appetite, often convert the blessings and bounty of heaven into sources of disease and disquiet. (*Good* 74)

In this passage, Sarah Hale establishes a policy of consumption that is common in Victorian domestic texts. "Eden taste" refers to both the sweetness of the fruit as well as the desire for that fruit. It suggests that one should be able to rise above mere physical tastes and exert rational control over one's choices. Do not fear the apple, Hale argues; instead, fear the inability to control one's appetite for the fruits of God's creation. She reframes the story of Genesis to suggest that the fruit was not cursed, but that God was instead testing the ability of his human creations to control their appetites. "Mankind often convert the blessings and bounty of heaven into sources of disease and disquiet;" they are not on their own inherently evil. She will continue this pattern throughout her text, demonstrating the need to reform American appetites rather than prohibiting particular foods. Moral reform, she suggests, does not come from villifying "the blessings and bounty of heaven." Americans must be held accountable for their choices, and it is the woman's role, as the purveyor of morality and the bastion of Christian influence, to cultivate their tastes in food and consumer goods. Hale, like many of her contemporaries, preaches a doctrine of moderation in consumption: each bite, each purchase, is a chance to exercise and control one's gift of free will. Thus each act of consumption is directly related to salvation. Every food choice is a chance for mankind to correct or repeat its Fall.

Hale is not, however, attempting only to establish a religious metaphor. Instead, she implies that just as Eve had the power to persuade Adam, women have the power to influence a society's food choices and must be educated in good taste to ensure the physical and moral health of the nation. Hale also demonstrates a rhetorical technique common in antebellum American women's print culture: the abstraction of "vulgar" physicality by an emphasis on the spiritual significance of women's domestic duties, the most important of which is managing her family's tastes by educating her own.

Victorian domestic writers present a discussion of taste rooted in evangelical Protestantism and the consumer market. Some argue that salvation of the nation begins in the home; others, that taste is a matter of quality and is firmly entrenched in the realm of the consumer. It is the job of domestic experts, then, to reconcile the seemingly contradictory demands of private home and public market, of domesticity and manifest destiny. Writers such as Sarah Josepha Hale promote a sort of *domestic evangelism*, spreading the doctrine of true womanhood so that other households might experience the joy of the conversion to middle-class values and practices. Often referred to as "influence," this doctrine, once applied to the members of a household, has far-reaching effects: it can impact national politics, change the status of Americans in foreign affairs, and even, as republican writers suggested before them, ensure the future progress of the nation. This rhetorical stance aligns Protestant Christianity with the role of the "true woman" as a consumer; taste as a rhetorical device is used to mediate between these roles.

This chapter examines the simultaneous development of antebellum women as pious Protestants and public consumers. While cookbooks published during the republican era emphasized egalitarian virtue as an extension of an Enlightenment discourse of taste, Victorian cookbooks demonstrate the increasingly moral and spiritual implications of culinary and consumer rhetoric. Growing industry and urban living, combined with the emergence of an increasingly powerful middle class, required domestic experts to carefully develop readers' physical and aesthetic tastes. Through biblical allusion and moral advice narrative, domestic experts such as Mary Mann and Sarah Hale worked to spread the gospel of middle-class taste. They argue that physical illnesses are indications of a weak moral fiber, and that proper

American citizens should learn to control their individual preferences for the sake of the national body. As God's chosen people, Americans are charged with spreading Christian civilization throughout the world; this begins with educating both palate and soul. Eliza Leslie, however, trains women to properly navigate their roles not only as domestic producers but also as consumers. She argues that women should develop a taste for quality; her recipes guide readers through a burgeoning consumer marketplace, emphasizing proper standards and behaviors for middle-class women. Their contemporary fiction, such as Susan Warner's *The Wide, Wide World* (1850), illustrate the blending of these roles by placing characters in situations described in cookery writing and advice literature. By situating this culture of domestic advice in a dramatic context, Warner is able to demonstrate the moral implications of proper taste.

Domestic Writing as a Social Medium

Kathryn Kish Sklar describes a "burgeoning genre of self-help and self-improvement literature written in the spirit of democratic individualism during the antebellum period" ("Introduction" v). She refers to this literary movement as "manual mania" and notes that while it was popular in all aspects of American life, it was particularly prominent in the sphere of women's domestic activities. Spurred on by improvements in book manufacturing and distribution as a result of the industrial revolution, these texts addressed the need to educate women during a time of immense change in their traditional experience. In fact, "book publishing actually exceeded general industrial levels" according to Mary Kelley, and the amount and variety of holdings in bookstores, libraries, salesmen, and individual families grew rapidly from 1830-1860 (13). This change was due in part to a transition from local artisan-

printers to major publishing houses centered in New York, Boston, and Philadelphia.[48] Sarah Robbins notes that texts published in New England, both American-authored and British imports, "were already asserting an expansive claim to be America's literature" ("Future" 568). These firms came to dominate nineteenth-century social media, and their content to some extent united "the dispersed elements of a vast social and economic system" (Kelley 14).

Rising literacy rates brought on by improvements in public and private education also facilitated this transition; by 1840, ninety percent of American men and women could read and write.[49] The industry of domestic writing grew rapidly, seeking wider audiences, placing their women readers "at the center of this transformation from scattered local audiences to larger regional and national ones" (Robbins, "Future" 568). Despite a simultaneous social effort to define domesticity in opposition to public industry and business, women's writing and literacy allowed (white, middle-class) women in disparate areas of the country to form a sense of collective gendered identity. Though usually used in contemporary society to refer to impersonal communication such as the Internet and television, domestic writing in the nineteenth century was itself a form of "social media" in that it attempted to reach women in their private homes and create a sense of continuity of experience and community otherwise absent from an increasingly gendered society.

Increased industrialization and urbanization, particularly in the northern United States, brought about many of the social and economic changes women experienced during the antebellum period. America's national territory had doubled, leading to a progression of western

[48] Ann Douglas notes that between 1840-1850, only 8% of American publishing occurred outside of these cities.

[49] Kelley is carefully to point out that this statistic applies only to "native-born, middle-class" American men and women; immigrants, blacks, and the poor are excluded from the literate public and thus are rarely addressed in published texts (14).

migration that separated extended families and disturbed the oral tradition of domestic education often passed among female family members.[50] These movements, combined with Jackson's removal of the Cherokees from their native lands and the annexation of Texas, Oregon, and California, challenged Americans' former understanding of unity and identity, often determined by the clear distinction between the foreign and the domestic.[51] It became the primary goal of domestic manuals to restore a sense of control to their female readers. Unlike republicanism, however, Victorian domestic identity was based on a set of emotional associations, rather than a civil education of future male citizens. Kelley notes that women "craved literary companionship" as a means to negotiate the increased sense of isolation brought on by expansion and industry, as well as the very instability of the emergent middle class as a viable economic group (15). They accomplished this goal by managing, shaping, and redefining the meaning of national tastes through a complex negotiation of women's roles as spiritual influence and capitalist consumer.[52]

Ann Douglas writes that the Victorian lady and the minister together changed the nineteenth-century literary scene (8). By capitalizing on the emerging popularity of print as a mass medium, they were able to "be unobtrusive and everywhere at the same time" (9). In the years surrounding the turn into the nineteenth century, states underwent a process of disestablishment, meaning that citizens were no longer required to attend the official state church; as a result, ministers had to work to attract congregants, often by employing secular print mediums. Disestablished clergy no longer held state-sponsored political power, and often,

[50] For more, see Mary Kelley, *Empire of the Mother*, 15.
[51] For more, see Evans, *Born for Liberty* (1989); Kelley, *Private Women, Public Stage* (1984); Ryan, *Empire of the Mother* (1982); and Kaplan, "Manifest Domesticity" (1998).
[52] It is important to remember that though these authors discussed their advice as a means of national reform and their recipes as representing national tastes, they were in reality representing the food culture that was common in the northeast and, to a lesser extent, the Midwest. As I will demonstrate in the next chapter, the southern states were in the process of developing a self-defining rhetoric of taste that differed in both flavor and expression from their northern Victorian counterparts.

according to Douglas, found their power in "moral influence," or the realm of power also relegated to women (43). Women, meanwhile, led by authorities such as Sarah Hale, editor of *Godey's Lady's Book*, believed that women should focus on domestic piety while men focused on commerce; woman was to be the "spiritual exemplar to her competitive-minded husband" (57).

During the 1830s-40s, women comprised the majority of church congregations and sought to be active participants; twice as many women converted to evangelical Protestant denominations as men. At the same time, Sara Evans argues, "Women along with the family and religion moved to the periphery, charged with preserving old values and a safe and stable haven against change" (69). In the aftermath of the Second Great Awakening, religious rhetoric shifted from an Enlightenment emphasis on the individual to a near-idolatry of the mother-child bond. The Sunday school movement further linked motherhood and piety and created a public space for women to perform their Christian duty; women also began Sunday Schools to convert poor children, hoping this would convert their parents as well and thus address the related problems of poverty and morality among lower classes. Religious reform provided women with a means to expand their private authority to more directly affect public good. Sara Evans refers to this period as the "age of association" or a time when women (and men) carved out public spaces "located between the private sphere of the home and public life of formal institutions of government" (67). Usually appearing in the form of voluntary reform societies in northern and midwestern cities, these public spaces allowed women in particular to negotiate new roles required of middle-class citizens in increasingly urban environments. Writes Evans, "In these spaces women gave new content to republican motherhood that transformed the boundaries of domesticity even as domesticity itself was being cloaked in Victorian images of submissiveness

and purity" (67). Rather than the overt political and intellectual reform requested of republican mothers, Victorian domestic experts increasingly wrote publicly about women's private lives, emphasizing the role of the mother in moral and emotional education. Despite a marked shift of women to the social periphery, domestic acts still retained the importance of nation-building. To bridge this gendered divide, Victorian women, like their republican predecessors, engaged discourses of taste to reinforce the natural and cultural dimensions of women's domestic educations.

Taste and the Female Body: Contradictions and Tensions

The continued separation of taste and physicality demonstrates a contradiction within women's evolving domestic roles. Nina Baym describes the competing roles of "spiritualized intellect" and gendered physicality, or the idea that "a weaker body equals less body, and less body equals more spirit" (*Feminism* 118). Yet in both descriptions--perhaps to the dismay of Victorian sensibilities--the body determines one's spiritual capacities. Cookbooks reveal the inability to escape the body, so while Lori Merish describes the female body as "a central site of political struggle and contestation" regarding the roles of sex, gender, race, nationality, and power in Victorian society, cookbooks demonstrate that the body is not only a representative site of struggle but a physical battleground as well (13). Women's anxieties about proper domestic management do not only concern her ability to control her family's tastes through nourishing meals. In order to maintain her position of moral and spiritual superiority, she must perpetuate--through her own food choices--her physical weakness. The less her body is noticed, the greater her domestic power. When we examine cookbooks as the material guides to women's

sentimental fiction, we can also understand that Victorians acknowledged sensory taste, if only to abstract it and thus remove the attention from the female body to its spiritual role. As such, foods were aligned with other consumer goods as "material concerns," all of which were engineered to cultivate and express one's spiritual, domestic identity. And yet, in cooking literature, the body is always present, heightening the tensions already present in women's rhetoric.

This reality often complicates cookbooks' usage of taste for modern readers. Many cookbooks mention taste; few, if any, mean an individual's perception and judgment of the flavor of a food item. Instead, taste refers to culturally-acceptable consumer choices, be those food items or material domestic goods. While it might seem taste should be used differently in cookbooks than in domestic manuals and fiction, in fact cookery writers relied on the cultural connotation of taste to promote their advice as "natural," even inevitable. The Victorian narrative of taste suggests that one's physical appetites are natural, even God-given, but must be controlled. The more taste is equated with material preference, the more it becomes a controllable entity, like buying a suitable Bible, rather than a quality subject to the whim of the individual body. At the same time, authors rely on the connotation of taste as natural to suggest that their material advice is not simply one preference among many, but that its choice was as natural as, for example, one's physical perception of sugar as sweet. The definitional relationship is cyclical: domestic writers rely on cultural taste to manage their society's food choices, yet they rely on the physical experience of taste to promote their particular brand of advice. Religious rhetoric often underscores this relationship, adding both significance and greater responsibility to women's domestic duties. The Victorian discourse of taste gave women a sense of power and agency to negotiate these contradictions.

The ability to define Victorian womanhood was further complicated by the lack of clarity in their public or private roles. Though women were often regarded as morally superior to men and were charged with ensuring the future virtue of the nation, they had few acceptable public venues.[53] And yet these same women were no longer important economic participants in the home. While in the early 1800s the home had commonly been a self-sufficient agricultural unit, producing everything from crops to cloth, by 1830 America's economy in the northern states had become far more commercial, far more global, and even farming evolved from subsistence to specialization. In less industrialized areas, public sentiment towards women's agricultural labor shifted during the antebellum years from praising their hard work to requiring them to abide by the same domestic framework as their urban counterparts. Thus much of the economic responsibility that had been shared by the family shifted to the men (Kleinberg 20). [54] For example, Child's *Frugal American Housewife* discussed home production of essentials such as bread and soap as an economizing measure, only purchasing them if one lived in the city; a decade later many cookbooks and domestic manuals assumed that part of domestic economy was the strategic purchasing of similar items, thus a material education was needed.

Discourses of feminine taste allowed women an ideological as well as a material public role: "The sentimental construction of feminine 'taste' has operated to articulate the distribution of economic resources in *personal* and *moral*, rather than *collective* and *political*, terms" (Merish

[53] Men in management or professional positions made up an emerging middle class, and their wives were increasingly confined to the home as a result of a concurrent ideology of domesticity which dictated that women must maintain the moral purity that was too easily corrupted by public participation. Meanwhile women--especially single women and widows--were losing what little social power they had previously held: midwives were increasingly barred from the medical profession, women were less likely to be employed publicly, and all women were denied the vote (Douglas 51).

[54] This was less true in the southern states, however, which in the early antebellum years were still primarily rural, and labor was overall localized. Women, however, were still confined to the home, both by a domestic ideology as well as a geographical reality.

11, emphasis in original). It aligns the choice in consuming particular goods with individual expression and thus obscures the social processes through which objects are assigned value. And yet cookbooks to some extent belie these social processes. While they address a woman in her home sphere, they also remind her of her participation in a process of collective domestic consumption by describing the value of goods in various cities or regions, their place or mode of production, etc.; in essence, cookbooks lay bare the processes of consumption that are sentimentalized in fiction.

As a result of increasingly separate spheres of activity, consumerism became an inevitable part of a woman's domestic faculty.[55] While industrialization changed women's civic duties and forced them into a more private existence, an increasingly capitalist society demonstrated that complete isolation from the public sphere was not possible. Merish argues that, "home consumption is part of the production process," and this act, while seemingly less public than men's work in business or industry, secures the future primacy of capitalism (9). Over-consuming, however, such as buying luxury items or eating until one is ill, was an abuse of this role, an indication of weak moral fiber. Thus even women's consumption required spiritual mediation. *Taste* became a discursive means to negotiate women's competing and contradictory roles and produce a unified, moral American citizenry.

No longer an aesthetic representation of collective identity, taste became a gendered concept, the domain of women whose assumed moral superiority and weak physical state made them--in popular textual representations--akin to God's messengers on earth. Women could reform society through their ability to properly consume; Merish refers to this practice as "redemptive materiality" (94). She argues that the middle-class consumer was "produced" by

[55] For more on the term "domestic faculty," see Ann Romines, *The Home Plot* (1992).

discursive practices "in tandem with a new idea of domestic womanhood" (2). The strong emphasis on materiality in domestic literature demonstrates that "[p]art of the cultural work of domestic fiction … was to construct equivalences between material and subjective 'refinement'--between commodity and psychological forms--while … [r]einventing capitalist economic and commodity structures as the forms of interiority proper to 'private,' domestic life" (2-3). Whereas Republican definitions of womanhood gave women a civic, intellectual duty, an era of increased industrialization required private women to participate actively in a capitalist system. As such, consumption became women's civic and sentimental identity through a process of domesticating their tastes (6).

The concept of taste allowed for the reproduction of middle-class Protestant values throughout Victorian society, as well as provided a way for the female middle-class consumer to distance herself from material need (Merish 9). As the previous chapter demonstrated, Sarah Hale criticized Lydia Maria Child's cookbook for its emphasis on economy and financial hardship. Acceptable in Franklin's *Autobiography*, the same concepts of frugality in a woman's text compromised the representative, sentimental materiality of Victorian womanhood. Though women were charged with the task of domestic management, public discussion of financial matters was considered vulgar. Instead, it became the ultimate job of the Victorian mother and the domestic text to produce moral standards by standardizing tastes.

Mary Ryan argues that antebellum domestic writing reveals women's struggles with the contradictions in their roles as both moral saviors and economic dependents. She writes that while "literary domestics felt compelled to look within the circle of domestic concerns for satisfaction, for all joys, and for ultimate purpose," that they also "found within themselves the stirrings of discontent, the sum of fears, and the basis of disillusionment" (251). By positioning

themselves as experts in domestic economy and daily examining the lives they were required to lead, they could not help but realize the "demoralizing and debilitating" condition of women (251). Yet they could not publicly critique this role. As Ryan writes, "To question and assess the quality of woman's duties was to question and assess the character of woman's life of domesticity, and that was to call into question the life's roles they were bound to accept … To criticize or perhaps condemn the way of life was to criticize or condemn the self" (251-52). Instead, they worked to perfect these roles, calling on all modes of public discourse allowed them and in which they were believed to be natural authorities: evangelical Protestantism and redemptive consumerism.

Protestant Dietary Reform: A Case Study

The bevy of reform movements that emerged in the northern states during the antebellum period often relied on discourses of taste to manage the bodily desires, or appetites, that were believed to be at the core of all social ills. Drunkenness, poverty, even indigestion--all result from an abuse of one's God-given gift of taste, according to these domestic writers. Mary Mann, author of *Christianity in the Kitchen, A Physiological Cook-Book* (1858), writes that understanding the "conditions of health and longevity" is a necessary first step "towards redeeming the race from its present degradation" (1).[56] Mann clearly establishes the connection of diet and morality, and overtly uses the language of an evangelical sermon to characterize dietary excesses as sins, writing, "a book of reckoning is kept for the offences of the stomach, as well as for those of the heart" (2). Health, she continues, "is one of the indispensable conditions

[56] Though Mann's text is published later than the others discussed in this chapter, I discuss it first because it contains the most distinctive connection of consumption and Christianity and thus clearly establishes the Protestant rhetoric of taste. By examining this text first, we can better understand how Hale and Warner combine this rhetoric with Victorian themes such as motherhood and consumerism.

of the highest morality and beneficence." Mann is not alone in her arguments. Protestant dietary reform movements emphasized "eating as a Christian should," or developing one's appetites so as to avoid excess, luxury, and greed (Sack 185). According to Daniel Sack, "diet shaped the state of the soul" (186). *Christianity in the Kitchen* demonstrates that taste is a function of reasoned moral behaviors, and that reason is a God-given quality created to manage a moral society.

Mann writes that it is necessary to understand how food acts on the body if one is to fully understand the task of reform. Society must learn to equate the behavior that results from excessive consumption with that of a medical disease, and thus alter the diet accordingly; in other words, reformers must treat the body as well as the soul. Yet this pursuit is not merely physical. Mann carefully focuses her readers on the necessity of cultivating middle-class tastes by describing the two forms of dietary moral abuses from which society suffers: excessive drinking, often associated with lower classes, and excessive eating, a sin of the upper class. Many reformers believed that far too many Americans "subscribed to a new ruling code that equated virtue with wealth and … that the mania for wealth would undermine spiritual and moral values" (Ryan 303). They also feared that the desire to display wealth and luxury would prevent philanthropy, the solution to the problems plaguing society due to rising poverty. Mann writes early in her Preface, "There is no more prolific,--indeed, there is no *such* prolific cause of bad morals as abuses of diet,--not merely by excessive drinking of injurious beverages, but by excessive eating, and by eating unhealthful food" (1, emphasis in original). As such, they believed it was the job of the middle class to reform society based on Protestant values: To understand the role of diet in shaping the soul, one must understand "the gospel of the body" (Mann 2).

Food choices, in other words, must nourish both. Mann, like, Hale, believed that God's food creations were not the enemy. She writes, "The profusions of *nature* tempt the appetite of man. The productions of the earth are at his command" (3, emphasis in original). According to many domestic writers, it is the primary role of taste to mediate between body and soul, or between God's creation and one's earthly appetites. Taste is itself a gift from God; just as Man is not to abuse His bounty by eating to excess, one should avoid abusing Taste by failing to develop it properly. She writes, "the pleasures of the appetite are legitimate pleasures. God did not implant the sense of Taste in man to ruin the beautiful structure of his body, or to impair the noble faculties of his soul" (Mann 1). She argues that "for the control of his appetite, man is endowed with reason and conscience;" in other words, taste (3). To abuse one is to abuse the other; a sin of the stomach is thus a sin of the soul. Mann describes in physiological terms the maladies caused by overeating,[57] and heightens her rhetoric by comparing reasoned tastes to brutish instinct. This, again, was a common comparison, as much dietary reform rhetoric concentrated on the role of culture or civilization in dictating food habits.

Dietary reformers such as Mary Mann, Sylvester Graham,[58] and even Sarah Hale (though her realm of influence extended far beyond diet) believed that Americans had become too reliant on large amounts of meat and rich foods. They believed that such an emphasis on meat and fat hindered digestion and "aroused diners' animal passions" (Sack 188). These passions extended to all forms of "appetites" or desires. Graham, for example, also argued that having sexual intercourse more than once a month would tax men's nervous systems and therefore prescribed a

[57] Mann writes, "Whatever affects the digestion immediately, affects the head mediately" (3).
[58] While Americans had begun to slip away from their faith in the hardiness of cornmeal that fueled revolutionary spirit, reformers such as Sylvester Graham proposed a diet rich in breads, specifically whole wheat, rather than the refined flour that still indicated luxury and extravagance. Graham, a Presbyterian minister-turned-nutrition reformer, spoke widely on the subject of self-control, particularly of one's tastes and appetites.

diet of sexual moderation. Intercourse led to natural or instinctual excitement of the organs themselves, he claimed; he was not concerned with morality or the "impure imagination" so much as the deleterious effects on the body (Kelley 28). Because "appetites" encompassed bodily or "animal" desires, the tastes that managed one's literal consumption also managed these instinctual cravings. In order to avoid an overt emphasis on the body, and in order to promote a moral society, women used "taste" to elevate society from bodily appetites to spiritual nourishment.

While women were usually responsible for the moral implication of one's appetites, both groups used animal or "brutish" imagery to contrast the "domesticated" diet with a diet governed only by instinct and habit (Mann 4). It was also imagery that suggests the remains of humoral theory in American dietary practices, a literal equation of animal foods with animal practices, or "you are what you eat."[59] Finally, it betrays a fear of the class or racial "other" which domestic ideals sought to erase. As Amy Kaplan writes, "domesticity not only monitors the borders between the civilized and the savage but also regulates traces of the savage within itself" (582). This caused some reformers to suggest a vegetarian diet, while others more moderately suggested Americans merely limit their meat intake. Mann writes that while the brute is governed by instinct, when his appetites are "domesticated," they are often "consequently corrupted," arguing that "their habits are placed on the side of indulgence, and not self-control" (4). This indictment of American food habits is particularly strong: Despite increased power and industry, as well as entry into a global economy, Americans are corrupting even the brute. As

[59] Mann bases much of her physiological analysis of nutrients acting on the developing human body on the development of young animals, often comparing them to young children whose tastes must be trained. Animal imagery allows her to discuss the physical side of nutrition without overemphasizing the human body; transitioning to discussing children allows her to demonstrate the connection of body and soul in the process of Christian salvation (7-10).

much Protestant rhetoric suggested that Americans had a Christian mission to convert the world, Mann suggests that they can barely control their diets. Her implied accusation is that with such little self-control, Americans cannot hope to properly manage consumption and therefore carry out their Christian duty in the world.

Like many diet reformers, Mann refers to certain dishes as "Christian" or "unchristian," depending on the level of richness or spice, the lack of processed ingredients, and most importantly, the body's ability to digest the dish easily and quickly (Sack 192). These cooking texts were written, as noted above, for the Victorian "true woman," or the middle-class housewife. "Christian appetites" thus became synonymous with American middle-class tastes, further demonstrating the synthesis of culinary and cultural rhetoric. In this way, cookbooks were a form of religious tract, intended to reform to the soul. In the language of many reform documents, which attempt to locate the causes of social ills, Mann concludes that "we are to eat, not to gratify ignoble appetites, but to build up purely and devoutly these temples of the Holy Spirit, which our bodies were designed to be" (5). Though hers is a "physiological cook-book," she is careful to avoid a discussion of the body as an end in itself. It is this act of elevating bodily acts and senses to signify moral values and social salvation that ultimately characterizes Victorian domestic writing.

From the Pulpit to the Table: Sarah Hale's Doctrine of Middle-Class Tastes

Mary Kelley calls the domestic advice literature written between 1830 and 1860 the "liturgy of a cult of domesticity" (17). Nowhere is her statement more apt than in the cooking texts of Sarah Josepha Hale. In her *Good Housekeeper* (1839), Hale composes an expansive treatise on Victorian tastes and their deployment in many realms of social activity. While her

project is certainly to reform the American diet, its implications--to distinguish moral Americans from race and class threats both foreign and domestic and to spread a "civilizing" Christian worldview--place women and domesticity at the center of social progress. Proper tastes, she argues, create strong moral bodies fit to be God's messengers to a corrupt world.

Both Mann and Hale use the rhetoric of evangelical Protestantism to convey the ultimate significance of women's duty to nourish a moral society. While Mann emphasizes science and reason as the basis of cultural tastes, however, Sarah Josepha Hale emphasizes the importance of the mother and the home in cultivating those tastes. She writes, "To be known as a 'good housekeeper'--in the comprehensive sense of the term,--should secure to a woman high respect; but if you are a *mother* the crowning grace of your household management will be, that you have rightly trained the children committed to your care" (125, emphasis in original).[60] The mother's primary responsibility was, of course, educating her children's tastes. Like Mann, she equates the regulation of appetites with training the reason and habits of children; nourishing healthy children, they argue, will sustain a morally healthy nation.

Mary Ryan writes of nineteenth-century Protestant ideology, "piety involved more than an inner conviction and passive devotion. If the involvement was private and personal, the commitment was social" (292). Women were the ultimate messengers of Christianity as one's love for God was demonstrated by selflessly serving others, the cornerstone of the doctrine of true womanhood. Domestic experts "sanctioned their literary interventions as work dictated by God which thereby transformed mere humble efforts into righteous proclamations" (293).[61]

[60] This emphasis on the mother also distinguished her advice from that of the popular Catharine Beecher and Lydia Child, both of whom had no children of their own.

[61] Though Mary Ryan refers to "literary domestics" as a group of twelve fiction writers, her arguments apply to many domestic writers in various genres during the antebellum period. In fact, several of the authors she names, such as Mary Virginia Terhune and Harriet Beecher Stowe, were also cookbook

Sarah Josepha Hale's cookbooks are perhaps the most overtly religious of the antebellum period. Baym writes that Hale "behaves like a trained biblical scholar," and that her "insistence on approaching Scripture directly and without authorities of course invokes the whole weight of the Protestant, if not the Antinomian, tradition" ("Onward" 257). Hale's *Good Housekeeper, or The Way to Live Well and To Be Well While We Live. Containing Directions for Choosing and Preparing Food, in regard to Health, Economy, and Taste,* often blurs the generic lines between cookbook, domestic advice manual, and sermon. David Reynolds argues that early nineteenth-century religious revivals led to a Protestant print culture, in which "The gap between sermons and novels, between religious poetry and secular poetry, between sacred allegory and earthly story--in short, the gap between doctrinal social texts and entertaining imaginative texts--suddenly became far narrower than it had been in Puritan times" (16). Cookbooks were no exception to this print ethos. They included recipes for foods, household goods, and proper middle-class behavior. They reinforced their recipes through stories, both biblical and anecdotal. By combining the spiritual and the secular, they produced and reproduced the evangelical consumer.

Hale dedicates her text to "Every American Woman who wishes to promote the health, comfort, and prosperity of her family" (*Good*). Hale then proceeds to quote, reference, or at times even refute biblical passages in order to bolster her arguments. She introduces her primary source as early as her title page, with the succinct epigraph, "Temperate in all things.--Bible." The advice that follows develops a diet of moderation, in which denying any item of food is an insult to God's creation. Instead, she agrees with Mann that God's bounty is a test to the human ability to control his or her appetite. The challenge to women, then, is to control the appetites of

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authors, just as several of the cookbook authors discussed in this chapter were also fiction writers. The lines dividing domestic genres were quite blurry.

others through proper domestic management. Sarah Hale distinguishes her volume in a flooded domestic print market, writing, "Such rational and Christian views of domestic economy have never before been enforced in a treatise on housekeeping" ("Preface"). The strength of her language is indicative of the arguments she will make throughout her text. While previous domestic manuals have referenced Christian values, she seems to suggest, hers alone is based on them and will thus "enforce" them within the mind of the reader throughout.

Enforce them she does, with remarkable repetition. She insists, using both reason and biblical argument, that a vegetarian diet is unchristian. Intriguingly, she begins this discussion as she opens her first chapter containing recipes, Chapter II: Bread. She writes, "The art of making *good bread* I consider the most important one in cookery, and shall therefore give it the first place in the 'Good Housekeeper.' Not that I believe bread to contain the 'quintessence of beef, mutton, veal, venison,' or that an exclusive vegetable diet is ideal for mankind" (9, emphasis in original). This statement allows her to transition into four-page homily on the dangers of a vegetarian diet and the Christian duties of humans to eat meat. While she begins with a scientific discussion of man's omnivorous physiology, including a humorously relevant footnote refuting the argument that man should be a vegetarian because monkeys are,[62] she quickly explains that the language of the Bible supports her stance. She quotes, "Behold I have given you every herb bearing seed, …and every tree in which is the fruit of the tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat" (10). As was common in evangelical domestic rhetoric, she does not remark upon the

[62] Hale writes, "Some determined advocates of the vegetable system maintain, that the teeth and stomach of the monkey corresponds, in structure very closely with that of man, yet it lives on fruits--therefore, if man followed nature he would live on fruits and vegetables. But though the anatomical likeness between man and monkeys is striking, yet it is not complete; the difference may be and doubtless is precisely that which makes a difference of diet necessary to nourish and develop their dissimilar natures. Those who should live as the monkeys do would most closely resemble them" (9, footnote).

origin of the passage, perhaps relying on her audience's likely knowledge of the Bible or, at the very least, its accuracy in the words of an able practitioner.

Hale claims that a vegetable diet was in place until God sent the flood to destroy mankind and his evil ways, and that "the new agent of human improvement and civilization" God gave to Noah was none other than a command for a change in diet: "Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you" (10). In other words, the source of mankind's evil ways was a desire for meat, and the lack thereof made their basest animal passions run wild.[63] In a rhetorical move characteristic of this text, Hale has enforced within her readers the need to eat meat if one hopes to create converts to Christianity: "Such was the Creator's arrangement, when he had determined that the character and condition of his rational creatures should go on improving, till the whole earth should be people and all be filled with the knowledge of the Lord" (10). She even secures her own place in God's plan on the following page, stating that anyone who does not cook their food and thus "violates the express command of God, to separate the flesh from the blood and not to use the latter … never improves in character or condition" (11). She anticipates the argument against her stance, that if meat was essential to man God would have appointed it to him from the beginning, by stating that Creation is "progressive," and this is God's way of demonstrating his power. If man had not been evil due to a vegetarian diet, God would not have been able to show the importance, the Christian duty, of eating meat. To bolster her assertions, she remarks that meat, unlike alcohol (a reference to the simultaneous Christian temperance movement), was never again forbidden to anyone. Sarah Hale thus argues that women should base their tastes on principles that are biblically sound; moderate diets, she suggests, create proper middle-class bodies.

[63] He does command that his people not be cannibals: "But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat" (Hale 10).

Nina Baym writes of the familiar interpretation of Sarah Hale's cultural impact,

> More often than not, … she is interpreted as a retrograde force, a woman who impeded the development of egalitarian feminism through her espousal of the ideology of separate spheres for the sexes and who contributed to the weakening of an older, vigorously masculine cultural style through her successful championing of an alternative feminine (i.e., sentimental, consumerist) aesthetic sensibility. ("Onward" 250)

Hale concedes that woman is the weaker sex, yet she turns even this into a moral strength. "Mind and spirit are superior to body," Baym notes, and thus according to Hale, Christianity "is the only movement historically successful in counteracting men's greater physical strength and hence in overcoming their ability to subjugate women" (Baym, "Onward" 256). Women's progress, and the progress of the American people, Hale argues, will be halted only by men who do not respect women's moral superiority and Christian mission.[64]

Baym speaks of Sarah Hale's conflation of Christian progress with women's history in her *Woman's Record* (1853). Yet it is apparent that this impulse is highly visible and effective in her culinary texts, specifically *The Good Housekeeper* (1839). The realities of the home and the miracles of the pulpit incorporate the rhetoric of nation-building so common to antebellum Americans. The two were at times indistinguishable from one another. Tompkins writes that the "Protestant-Republican ideology, which identified the spreading of the Gospel with the building of a nation, did not distinguish clearly if at all between activities that had a practical aim--such as the straightening of a room, the building of a school, or the starting of a business--and activities

[64] Baym quotes Hale's *Woman's Record*: "I believe ... that WOMAN is God's appointed agent of morality, the teacher and inspirer of those feelings and sentiments which are termed the virtues of humanity; and that the progress of these virtues and the permanent improvement of our race, depend on the manner in which her mission is treated by man" (xxxv, qtd. in Baym, 255).

that were specifically spiritual--like reading the Bible or attending prayer meetings" (156). Cookbooks outline a path to the spiritual miracles preached about at the pulpit and fictionalized by popular women writers, but they also demonstrate a necessary sense of control over one's daily destinies that neither sermons nor novels emphasize, at least not to such as extent.

Civilizing Tastes: Manifest Destiny and Domestic Evangelism

Sarah Hale's domestic advice relies on the rhetoric of the moral superiority of Christian women and their evangelical mission. *The Good Housekeeper* is a form of Protestant evangelism, demonstrating that Christianity elevates any activity to an important historical and cultural contribution. Writes Nina Baym,

> In Hale's representation, the two themes cannot be disentangled because the Christian and the feminine are one. The Christian message is precisely the superiority of women, the destined mission of women is to Christianize the world, and the story of history is of the inevitable progress toward a world dominated by Christian and Christianizing women. Without Christianity, women are underestimated, degraded, enslaved; without women, Christianity is misunderstood, devalued, corrupted. Hence, it is imperative that every woman be a Christian and that every Christian man learn to recognize women's moral superiority. ("Onward" 253)

In this text, we see that Hale's mission is to impress upon women their moral and spiritual duties, not only to their families, but to the ultimate progress of the nation and of Christians throughout the world. As such, we see two strains of evangelism--the local and the global--in *The Good*

Housekeeper. Hale uses biblical rhetoric and debate in her first cookbook as methods of cultivating a highly "Christianized" version of American taste.

The Good Housekeeper uses pronounced imperial or "civilizing" rhetoric to accomplish its goals of promoting American tastes while also properly nourishing American citizens. Amy Kaplan notes that "until recently it has been assumed that nationalism and foreign policy lay outside the concern and participation of women" (583). However, one only needs to look at cookbooks, perhaps the ultimate practical guides to domestic management, to see that in fact monitoring the borders of nation and "foreign" were greatly within women's sights. The opening lines of Hale's *Good Housekeeper* state that the purpose of her text is to address foreigners' criticisms of Americans: "Foreigners say that our climate is unhealthy; that the Americans have, generally, thin forms, sallow complexions and bad teeth" ("Preface"). Hale does not deny these criticisms, but instead suggests their cause, continuing "Is it not likely that these defects are incurred, in part if not wholly, because the diets and modes of living are unsuitable to the climate, and consequently to the health of the people?" In other words diet, not climate, is to blame for American's physical deficiencies. Though foreigners criticize the geographical entity that is America, Hale suggests that the problem is Americans themselves. While this accusation may seem odd, if not insulting, it is a common argument in the culture of evangelical reform, one that allows a solution; climate cannot be reformed, but people can. The American public, Hale suggests, simply needs domestic reform: "Could public attention be drawn to this important subject sufficiently to have a reform in a few points--such as allowing *animal food* to excess, eating *hot bread*, and swallowing our meals with steam-engine rapidity--this question of climate

might more easily be settled" (5, emphasis in original).[65] By publishing this text, she is demanding public attention be paid to matters heretofore assumed to be private. She also challenges the foreign definition of American as "other" by giving Americans the power of self-definition through diet. She thus charges women with cultivating tastes that will properly define the national body as distinct from a *foreign* "other."

Domesticated tastes and the realm of moral influence thus extended far beyond the home. Amy Kaplan argues that, in fact, "The empire of the mother thus shares the logic of the American empire; both follow a double compulsion to conquer and domesticate the foreign, thus incorporating and controlling a threatening foreignness within the borders of the home and the nation" (591). Sara Evans roots the "confidence with which women asserted their moral mission to teach and to engage in social reform outside the home" in their participation in the second Great Awakening, an early nineteenth-century revivalist movement which presented a "feminized" religion and encouraged female participation (72-73). Viewed by some scholars as a response to the dual marginalization of women and religion in the American republic, these evangelical revivals reasserted the need for individual conversion experiences and the resulting emphasis on morality in an increasingly capitalist society.

Hale relies on imperialist rhetoric to provide physical, intellectual, and moral justification for her claims. This is also a form of evangelical reform. Reynolds writes that these texts were written in an age "whose moral vision was governed by a faith in progress, Manifest Destiny, and human perfectibility" (54). Likewise, Sara Evans writes of Catherine Beecher, a

[65] Notice her use of "steam-engine rapidity" as a negative illustration of American eating habits. This phrase acknowledges the industrial and technological advances that are creating the society that she must now educate. Public industry, she seems to suggest, should not determine American tastes, which are the purview of women. She also suggests that while these advances are useful, Americans' desire for them, like American appetites, should be controlled.

contemporary of Hale's, "By redefining womanhood in middle-class terms and elevating the political importance of the home, Beecher envisioned women as agents of middle-class culture, of moral regeneration, and by implication of manifest destiny" (96). Hale capitalizes on the emerging Protestant conception of Americans as "God's chosen people" to promote her efforts at dietary--and therefore moral--reform. Thus her arguments about the evils of vegetarianism take on a greater significance. God's chosen people, according to Hale, are those who eat meat:

> In strict accordance with this theory, which makes a portion of animal food necessary to develop and sustain the human constitution, in its most perfect state of physical, intellectual and moral strength and beauty, we know that now in every country, where a mixed diet is habitually used, as in the temperate climates, there the greatest improvement of the race is to be found; and the greatest energy of character. It is that portion of the human family, who have the means of obtaining this food at least once a day, who now hold dominion over the earth. … In every nation on earth the *rulers,* the men of power whether princes or priests, almost invariably use a portion of animal food. (11-12)

Hale equates the temperate American climate and the temperate diet with the ability to perfect the body and its moral and spiritual impact. It is this moral perfectability based on climate and class, she argues, that gives Americans the ability to "hold dominion over the earth." She then turns her attention more explicitly to American progress by comparing their eating habits to those of their ancestors around the world. A taste for meat, in essence, is civilizing and strengthening. A weak body, after all, cannot claim ultimate civilizing power: "The severe and unremitting labors of every kind, which were requisite to subdue and obtain dominion of a wilderness world, could not have been done by a half starved, suffering people. A larger quantity

and better quality of food were necessary here than would have supplied men in the old countries, where less action of body and mind are permitted" (Hale, *Good* 12). Yet again Hale's text reveals a contradiction in women's roles: their power is represented as the ultimate spiritual achievement, but their power is dependent on a weak physical body. Here, however, Hale argues that physical strength is required for political dominion. While this seems to be simply a gendered division--weak females influence while strong males dominate--Hale has already made it clear that women's civilizing influence is required for imperial success.

Mary Mann likewise complicates her elevation of taste to a spiritual aesthetic when she discusses regional agriculture and its relationship to health and taste, both flavor and preference. Science suggests, she writes, "that each climate and region produce those articles of food which it is most healthful to eat in their respective localities" (12). Foods that must be transported long distance must be picked before they are ripe to avoid spoilage, and are therefore not eaten in their normal condition. The health benefits they allow those native to the region in which they grow are not transferred to those who live in the areas to which they are imported. Oranges, pineapples, figs, bananas, even sweet potatoes--all of these, she writes, "are nearly tasteless when imported half-ripe" (14). This suggests that taste--in this case, flavor--is in fact important when deciding what foods build up a healthy body. She also implies, however, that imported foods are more expensive and thus not in line with middle-class tastes or values. Thus her discussion of regional produce actually employs both meanings of taste, as well as both roles of a Victorian woman: a moral educator and a consumer. She ends with a nod to imperialism that is developed in Sarah Hale's domestic writing. Mann concludes: "Doubtless many of these things may be acclimated with us by suitable arrangements, and will be among the future triumphs of scientific

agriculture" (14). Mankind, she suggests, will eventually use God's gift of reason to transcend region, thus allowing Americans to satisfy their tastes through Christian mission.

Kaplan refers to the paradox of "imperial domesticity," in which women gain their sovereign power by withdrawing from the public world and strengthening "domestic" borders of the home (586): "The empire of the mother shared with the American empire a logical structure and a key contradiction: both sought to encompass the world outside their borders; yet this same outward movement contributed to and relied on the contradiction of the domestic sphere to exclude persons conceived of as racially foreign within those expanding national boundaries" (599-600). Kaplan reframes critical studies of women as "model bourgeois subjects" in terms of the textual production of "racialized national subjectivity of the white middle-class woman in contested international spaces" (600). Cookbooks are uniquely positioned to address this process. They promote tastes that constitute both the physical body and the discursive, or imagined, national body. As such, the values assigned to food items and dishes are not only based on class, but on racial associations within that class. Just as early settlers avoided cornmeal for fear of incurring very real bodily changes that might turn them into the native Americans they perceived as foreign, Victorian women lived in fear of overemphasizing the physical body. Stressing bodily functions threatened their domestic and moral sovereignty, as the paradoxical means of their power was their perceived physical weakness. Tastes for particular foods, then, had to be cast as a means to employ and extend their domestic power in light of a perceived national body.

Eliza Leslie: Cultivating Middle-Class Consumers

As the industrial revolution gradually changed the landscape of American politics and production, women's particular role in this transformation became that of a careful consumer.

The market itself became a space that negotiated women's public and private identities. While Sarah Hale used the language of evangelical religion to promote her views on domestic management and women's social advancement, Eliza Leslie developed the consumer aspect of Victorian womanhood. Unlike Hale or Mann, Leslie does not explicitly place moral value on any particular dish, nor does she reference the Bible, religious teachings, or spiritual conversion. She also rarely mentions national character or progress. Yet her domestic texts are not only plentiful--she published nine cookbooks over the course of her career, as well as many other children's books and stories, articles, and etiquette manuals--they were also the most influential of their time. Her *Directions for Cookery*, first published in 1837, was one of the most popular cookbooks of the nineteenth century and went through many editions and reprintings, the last of which was in 1892, thirty-five years after her death.[66] Janice Longone writes that it was so influential, in fact, that "when publishers issued her subsequent titles, they took pains to indicate that the new book was 'supplemental' to *Directions* and had all new recipes" ("Feeding").

Leslie represented a new type of domestic authority in antebellum America. Her claim to authority was based not on her previous print history, as was Child's and Hale's, or on her fame as a hostess, as was Randolph's. Rather, Leslie grew famous as a cooking expert after she attended Mrs. Goodfellow's Cooking School in Philadelphia and published *Seventy-Five Receipts for Pastry and Sweetmeats* (1828), a collection of recipes she learned as a student. She was the first cooking-school educated domestic authority in America. Her cooking texts provided economic security and maintenance of social status for both Leslie and her mother after the death of her father and a series of financial problems (Williams 63). The cooking school emphasis on uniform standards of quality pervades Leslie's writing, which is remarkably different in tone and

[66] Leslie died in 1858 of complications resulting from obesity.

persona from Mann's or Hale's. Leslie wrote to standardize and streamline recipes and measurements for the domestic woman; as such, she masked her individual voice and perspective to emphasize material standards, rather than ideological tastes.

Directions for Cookery is likely her most famous cookery text; her popular *Lady's Receipt Book* (1847) departs, in both form and content, from her previous cookbooks. Whereas her earlier texts included only an advertisement written by the publishers, *Lady's Receipt Book* incorporates a first-person preface. It is also the first to include recipes for non-food items beyond basic perfumes or household cleaners. Leslie instead provides extensive instructions for activities such as letter-writing or packing for an extended trip. Rather than addressing a variety of classes, Leslie emphasizes the upper-middle class exclusively, writing for "[f]amilies who possess the means and inclination to keep an excellent table" and noting that many recipes are of French origin, though she has not given their titles in French as "foreign designations can rarely be comprehended, or indeed accurately pronounced" ("Preface"). This is not an insult to her "young countrywomen;" rather, it is a means of removing the stigma of luxury from French cooking and allowing a middle-class audience to appreciate its long-standing techniques. For Leslie, proper taste indicates quality: quality of ingredient, of consumer good, of technique. In order to train readers in her interpretations of quality, she even includes addresses--within the recipes themselves, rather than as advertisements at the beginning or end of the text--for Philadelphia artisans and merchants who sell the goods she references. She does not merely suggest the purchase of a type of item; she points readers to a specific material production in order to standardize and train their tastes in quality.

These elements of Leslie's *Lady's Receipt-Book* point to the further removal of physical taste from the recipe and to Leslie's expansion of the recipe form to include the education in

those domestic activities which were typically passed down by a mother or female relative. While these activities certainly reflected on a woman's moral state, they did so in the context of performance of social class rather than one's religious affiliations or spiritual standing. Like Hale, however, Leslie relies on middle-class values to ensure the progress of society and, in particular, the status of the domestic woman.

The types of non-food recipes she includes in the *Lady's Receipt Book*--namely letter-writing--are particularly relevant to her cultural moment, as these were skills that would have typically been taught and overseen by the mother. And unlike recipes for common remedies or toiletries found in other cooking texts, many of Leslie's recipes were quite long and narrative. For example, Leslie's "Letters" is a six-page long discussion of everything from paper choice to envelope orientation and state codes. In fact, her discussion involves primarily the materiality of the letter: where to begin writing depending on the length of one's message, where to leave blank space so as not to lose part of the message when the seal is torn, etc. Leslie also instructs readers in proper means of addressing letters to see they reach the correct city, state, and country. A related recipe, for "Crossing the Sea," also expands women's sphere of influence as it discusses writing to family and friends during a voyage across the Atlantic. These recipes reference American economic and cultural expansion, a primary cause of what writers considered the domestic crisis facing Victorian American women. As women were forced to negotiate new roles based on territorial expansion that often separated extended families and the oral culture of domestic advice, printed recipe books became a way to not only learn domestic techniques but to standardize those techniques, thus uniting national tastes through print. Yet Leslie also includes the addresses of many Philadelphia shops, thus locating her text in a particular place, an unusual

characteristic in northern domestic writing of this period.[67] Leslie's *Lady's Receipt Book* demonstrates the material reality of living in an expanding global economy, and seeks to define women's place as a series of negotiations with taste, commodity, and class.

Going Shopping in *The Wide, Wide World*: A Study in Sentimental Consumerism

Mary Mann and Sarah Hale use biblical debate as the primary rhetorical strategy to develop her arguments about physical consumption, while Eliza Leslie emphasizes material consumption. The same set of tastes, however—those of a white, Protestant, middle-class—govern both. Susan Warner's domestic novel, *The Wide, Wide World*, clearly illustrates both meanings of taste. Her narrative, what Ann Romines refers to as "woman-identified realism," is infused with references to the material world of the Victorian woman (7). Early in the novel, Warner describes Ellen's daily duty of properly preparing her mother's tea and toast in both sentimental and material terms:

> She used in the first place to make sure that the kettle really boiled; then she carefully poured some water into the teapot and rinsed it, both to make it clean and to make it hot; then she knew exactly how much tea to put into the tiny little teapot, which was just big enough to hold two cups of tea, and having poured a very little boiling water to it, she used to set it by the side of the fire while she made half a slice of toast. (13)

[67] Southern cooking texts, such as *The Kentucky Housewife* (1839) and *The Carolina Housewife* (1847), both discussed in the following chapter, were far more likely to locate their texts in a distinct region or reference foods particular to that agricultural area. They were unlikely, however, to reference shops or producers as the primary means of production remained in the home far longer than in industrial northern cities whose female citizens produced the majority of antebellum cooking texts.

Warner continues to describe how Ellen properly slices, browns, and butters her mother's toast, how she pours into the tea "just the quantity of milk and sugar her mother liked," and how she does it all "with the zeal that love gives" (13). With the exception of the third-person narration, Warner's discussion of Ellen's behavior reads very much like a recipe for proper preparation of one's afternoon tea. Her mother eats very little, thus reinforcing both her fictional ailing body, as well as what Baym describes as woman's strength in physical weakness expected of the actual readers. The recipe thus creates both a final food product as well as the proper woman to prepare and consume it.

Warner's recipes, like Leslie's often instruct readers to perform daily activities as well as to prepare food. In the following scene, the details of which continue over the course of more than forty pages, Ellen Montgomery and her mother shop for necessities, from Bibles to writing desks to clothing, for Ellen's prolonged stay away with her father's sister, Miss Fortune. The material emphasis of Ellen's early training as a female consumer is juxtaposed with the product she is consuming--the Bible:

> In the excitement and eagerness of the moment, Ellen had thrown off her light bonnet, and with flushed cheek and sparkling eye, and a brow grave with unusual care, as though a nation's fate were deciding, she was weighing the comparative advantages of large, small, and middle-sized; black, blue, purple, and red; gilt and not gilt; clasp and no clasp. (Warner 30)

This scene effectively illustrates the blending of women's roles during this stage of American domesticity: moralist, domestic, Christian, consumer. In keeping with the rest of the text, the level of detail, including the variety of colors and styles of Bibles, is immense, particularly for such a short passage. Yet it also indicates the larger significance of her actions by likening her

consumer behaviors to a national future. The significance of her actions are in direct proportion to the amount of detail given by the author: the more difficult her decision, the more important its effect on those around her. Early in her novel, Warner emphasizes the importance of training women to consume properly by using the ultimate representation of Christian womanhood: the material Bible.

The juxtaposition Warner provides, of the material mixed with the spiritual, is exactly the blending sought after by antebellum cookbooks. While Ellen is pouring over at least a dozen different Bibles, Mrs. Montgomery must turn away to hide her tears at the thought of soon giving up her daughter as a result of her health and economic misfortunes. Yet she is comforted by the very message found in the collection of books currently engaging her daughter: "She remembered the words Ellen had been reading to her that very morning, and they came like the breath of heaven upon her soul. 'Not my will, but thine be done.' She strove and prayed to say it, and not in vain; and after a little while she was able to return to her seat" (Warner 30). Ellen is judging these texts only by their aesthetic and practical concerns--the weight of the text, or the size of the print. Yet each text contains the same message, the very message which at the same time is comforting her mother. The variety of texts that can each reach the same end--the creation of the pious woman--is an indication of woman's simultaneous responsibility as a consumer. Warner describes the importance of the choice, "as though a nation's fate were deciding," in collective terms similar to those used during the Republican era, but sentimental discourse privileges the personal choice and associations, rather than the national character it could create. Sara Evans refers to this period as the "age of association,"[68] in which individual

[68] In *Born for Liberty* (1989), Sara Evans refers to this era as taking place between 1820-1845. The ideologies of womanhood that develop, however, would certainly extend beyond those years into Warner's 1850 novel.

morality and personal associations based on moral education and reform took precedence over a larger sense of national participation, which would be viewed as too overtly public (Evans 69). Yet domestic experts clearly cast their private moral educations as having a significant national, even global, impact.

Though Mrs. Montgomery attempts to deny it, telling Ellen of the need for more shopping, "I am afraid your head will be turned," the constant emphasis on materiality in this text belies a culture dependent on women's ability to balance material and spiritual concerns (Warner 32). Writes Lori Merish, "We have learned to see an apparent contradiction between revivalism and materialism in antebellum America," yet domestic texts demonstrate that in fact this contradiction was at the heart of women's Victorian identities (89). As if to solidify this balance, Ellen finally narrows her choices down to two Bibles, each of which suit her practical needs. In the end, she chooses the red Bible, telling her mother, "I like that best, because it will put me in mind of yours" (Warner 31). When material concerns are equal, this scene suggests, the young female consumer chooses the Bible with the preferred emotional association. This association in the Republican era would likely have concerned one's role in the national body; sentimental rhetoric redefines it as the mother-child bond, associated with one's role in a heavenly body. Domestic literature highlights the role of the mother reproducing the proper pious consumer in her child. In the absence of a mother, domestic manuals perform this act of reproducing a woman in their image. The debate over what that image should be, though often contested, clearly revolved around one central concern: the tensions implicit in women's dual roles as arbiters of material and spiritual tastes.

After purchasing Ellen's new Bible, the most important tool for a Victorian true woman and thus the first priority of their shopping excursion, Mrs. Montgomery continues their outing--

and Ellen's simultaneous training--with a search for a writing desk and letter-writing materials. She describes in immense detail the materials necessary to furnish a writing desk, and how to buy those of the best quality. While Ellen makes her own choices, based on her knowledge of "Miss Allen's" writing desk, her choices are guided by her mother's gentle questions and prompting. For example, when Ellen is choosing the wax for her seal, Mrs. Montgomery finds that she "had made up an assortment of the oddest colours she could find" (Warner 35). Ellen's reasoning is that red "is so common." According to domestic experts such as Leslie, however, red is the highest quality. Mrs. Montgomery is aware of this, but rather than telling Ellen what to do, she tells her, "I think [red] is the prettiest of all," capitalizing on Ellen's reverence for her mother and demonstrating the powerful role of *influence*. Likewise, Warner uses the rhetoric of influence to structure her narrative, thus engaging a sphere dominated by materialism and motherhood. Her readers learn by Ellen's guided experience how to be a proper consumer and a proper woman. Rather than composing overt instructions as cookbook authors do, Warner fictionalizes the process and simultaneously trains her readers as she describes Ellen's domestic education.

Mrs. Montgomery guides Ellen through a variety of choices ranging from the necessary sizes of letter paper and envelopes, a proper inkstand, wax tapers and matches (Ellen chooses matches, despite Leslie's advice below), pens, wax, and seals. Though much of this narrative is straightforward, Warner is careful to imbue each action with emotional significance. Mrs. Montgomery often reflects with sadness that she will never again see these materials, though Ellen cannot imagine writing to anyone but her mother. When Ellen suggests that she buy notepaper, Mrs. Montgomery smiles and asks knowingly, "'Who are the notes to be written to, Ellen?'", but concludes that they should buy the paper even if Ellen "'should not want to use a

sheet in half a dozen years'" (Warner 33). She thus implies in one purchase both the necessity and inevitability of courtship and marriage for her young daughter. The audience realizes that Mrs. Montgomery is using this shopping trip to teach Ellen all the lessons of true womanhood that would typically be spread over the next few years of her childhood. That she uses the consumer experience to introduce her daughter to the duties of her gender is especially telling of the unique blending of virtue and consumerism.

Compare this scene to the following recipe in Eliza Leslie's *Lady's Receipt Book*:

> LETTERS.--For letter-writing, always use good paper; it should be fine, smooth, white, and sufficiently thick not to let the writing show through on the other side. Very good letter-paper can seldom be purchased at less than twenty-five cents per quire. That which is lower in price is inferior in quality. If you cannot trust yourself to write straightly without some guide, have printed ruled lines to slip beneath the page; for a letter does not look well if written on paper that is already ruled with pale blue ink. If you write a small hand, your lines should be closer together than if your writing is large. It is well to have several sorts of rules lines; they are to be bought at any stationer's for a few cents a page. (350)

Though these elements of the letter are not discussed at length during this scene, Warner is careful to tell readers that Mrs. Montgomery buys these materials while Ellen is involved in the more creative choice of a seal: "Mrs. Montgomery laid in a good supply of wafers of all sorts; and then went on further to furnish the desk with an ivory leaf-cutter, a paper-folder, a pounce-box, a ruler, and a neat little silver pencil" (Warner 35-6). She also adds drawing paper and utensils, which readers recognize is appropriate for a young woman of greater fortunes, but is unlikely to serve Ellen well when living with her more practical country relatives. Leslie

continues for several pages to describe the process of writing the letter itself--where to begin on the page depending on the length of the letter, how to date and address it properly so that it reaches the desired destination, how to correct errors and avoid the words being marred if the letter is torn when opened. She also reminds readers that they might need notepaper and smaller seals and envelopes for such occasions: "There are varieties of beautiful little wafers for notes; also of beautiful note-paper" (354). After this lesson she returns to describing the products necessary to send a proper letter:

> For sealing letters no light is so convenient as a wax taper. A lamp or candle may smoke and blacken the wax. To seal well, your wax should be of the finest quality. Good red wax is generally the best, and its color should be of a brilliant scarlet. Inferior red wax consumes very fast; and always, when melted, looks purplish or brownish. (354)

"Letters" is significant for its overt emphasis on materiality, specifically that of the middle to upper class. Leslie's directions take readers from the market to the home by her careful attention to detail, from publicly shopping to the bodily act of writing. Her instructions are heavily informed by class-based tastes and cultural markers, yet she also acknowledges the price of certain items. Because she is referencing women's material culture, the advice which might be considered vulgar it is were framed in terms of financial need becomes not only culturally acceptable but itself an indicator of class status. She remarks when a necessary item is only "a few cents," implying that its lack marks the reader as below the virtuous middle-class standards (350).

Leslie's recipe is remarkably similar to the instruction Mrs. Montgomery gives Ellen in Warner's novel. Ellen chooses wax matches, rather than a taper, explaining to her mother, they

"burn just long enough to seal one or two letters," more appropriate for a girl of Ellen's age who will have less need to write many letters at once (Warner 34). The significance Leslie assigns to particular material choices is also implied in the act of guiding Ellen away from colorful waxes--though she is permitted to purchase several, as she must learn to make her own choices--toward traditional, quality red. After describing the proper state abbreviations and titles of possible recipients, she concludes this recipe with the following instructions: "In putting up packets to send away, either tie them round and across with red tape (sealing them also) or seal them without tying. Twine or cord may cut through the paper, and is better omitted. Never put up any thing in newspaper. Beside the danger of spoiling the articles inside, it looks mean and disrespectful" (Leslie 356). Each instruction is given with an eye to quality and the level of virtue and respectability assigned to each material choice.

Warner's novel also engages the proper performance of one's material needs and preferences. When Ellen, due to her mother's illness, ventures out on her own to buy fabric, she must apply all that she has learned about her role as a consumer in a new forum: the clothing-store. The clerk treats her rudely, ignoring her specific requests and trying to sell her more expensive fabric, looking down on her when she does not know what to choose. Though a kind elderly man helps her, chastising the clerk for his poor behavior, Warner reveals the perils of the marketplace and depicts consumerism as unpleasant domestic labor. This reveals the tension between consumerism and domestic piety: women must be skilled in both areas, but consumerism must only support their spiritual endeavors. Writes Douglas of this scene, "Shopping for the necessities of food and apparel is painful, even unnatural; shopping to furbish the refined pursuits of religion and literature is delightful, and somehow not shopping at all" (64). Ellen's first remark upon entering the bookstore, "Oh, what a delicious smell of new

books!" suggests the instinctual pleasure she takes in this portion of the shopping excursion (Warner 29). Like physical taste, smell is often considered a "low" sense, not allowing room for necessary reflection or contemplation (Korsmeyer 57). Kant describes (literal) taste and smell as "subjective" senses that "draw attention to the state of one's own individual body" (57); in this context, Ellen's immediate pleasure in smell indicates her need for proper consumer training in order to function as part of a social body. Ellen, however, remains a "symbol of expenditure," demonstrating throughout the novel her struggle to regulate her material needs and desires through her lessons in piety and self-sacrifice.

Textual Reproduction: Physicality and Spirituality

These examples demonstrate the intersecting and often contradictory roles of spirituality, materiality, and taste in antebellum society. Hale's cookbook attempts to represent sin as the inability to rationally control one's appetites, but the need for food to nourish the physical body permeates her narrative. Likewise, Warner demonstrates the need for a physical document--moreover, the proper physical document, neither too ostentatious nor too diminutive--to create the correlating proper middle-class Victorian woman. Yet Mrs. Montgomery's concern that Ellen's "head will be turned" also implies that developing one's consumer abilities is not enough; body and mind require nourishment. In an era that saw increased women's participation in evangelical social and religious reform, taste became the primary means to disseminate middle-class values.

Two primary features of the antebellum Victorian print industry include the emphasis on domesticity as the center of print conversation and women's replacement of men as the principal subject matter, reading audience, and best-selling authors (Kelley 16). Kelley identifies this

culture as the "empire of the mother" and argues that motherhood became the dominant feature of discourse in antebellum society. As the primary moral caretaker, she nourished both mind and body and thus held a critical position in antebellum society. Domestic writing carefully connected cultural tastes to moral values, which were in actuality the value system of middle-class Americans. Women thus ensured their survival as an economic group by promoting their way of life as natural, basic, even God-given, using the authority of print. Mary Ryan refers to these women writers as "literary domestics," writing that while scholars have recognized their presence for years, they have not known what to do with them. Many previously overlooked their importance to American print and literary culture, deeming them too conventional, while others attempted to paint them as "subversives, as promulgators of quasi-revolutionary manifestoes with the expressed purpose of liberating women from their domestic captivity" (Ryan viii). This tack, however, often places them outside their historical context, and more importantly, denies or ignores the significance of the antebellum domestic experience to nineteenth-century public and private culture.

Central to the domestic experience was the woman's role as mother. In a trend well-documented by the sentimental rhetoric of novels and domestic manuals, "The American God changed from a patriarchal, authoritarian figure to a maternal, emotional one" (Kleinberg 81). When considered in terms of a burgeoning print culture and conservative Victorian sexual ideologies, the mother's role of reproduction takes on a vital new meaning. Kathryn Sklar notes that many historians have linked Victorian sexual ideologies to the declining birth rate, specifically those that described women's lack of sexual passions and the physical, even life-threatening weakness incurred by both sexes as a result of intercourse (xii). As a result, motherhood became an important topic of discussion as it shifted from quantitative to qualitative.

Sklar quotes Elizabeth Cady Stanton: "Having gone through the ordeal of bearing a child, I was determined if possible to keep him, so I read everything I could find on the subject" ("Introduction" xi). Stanton is pointing to the necessity of domestic media—both sentimental fiction and manuals—in the act of reproducing middle-class tastes. As the nation expanded, multiple reproductions of one text distributed like ideas to large portions of the population; this act of textual reproduction led to a standardized reproduction of tastes.

Print negotiates the divide between the individual education given by a mother to her child and a collective public education. Domestic texts, though often read privately, give readers a sense of the "limitless others" who might be reading, and thus replicate the sense of community and association found in group religious reform activities (Warner, *Letters* xiii). Sarah Hale describes the role of mothers in shaping national tastes:

> Only bear in mind that the *first feeling* of the infant is desire for food, the *first pleasure* in life the gratification of appetite, and we shall see of what immense importance it is that the habit of regulating this instinct for food by the rules of reason and experience should be the first one formed in our children. Of course the foundation of this habit must be laid in the entire submission of the appetites of the young child to the reason and experience of its mother. (125)

Merish writes of the early nineteenth century, "the domestication of feminine taste … was being envisioned as a form of emotional as well as civic pedagogy" (91). Reproduction and reform were at once personal and collective, private and public.

Domestic texts were thus charged with the dual responsibilities of reproduction and reform of individual tastes. Yet they, like the women they represented and produced, promoted conservative gender and sexual ideologies that simultaneously confined women to the home and

empowered them through print. Merish writes, "sentimental narratives engender feelings of power as well as submission endemic to liberal political culture" and thus "agency and subordination are intertwined" (3). They articulated a spiritual expansion of women's traditional roles within the in order to distract from their limited public roles. Repressive sexual ideologies argued that women were confined by their natural bodies and weak physicality, but that this weakness gave them greater spiritual strength and natural moral influence. Yet the rhetoric of taste developed in these narratives placed a great amount of emphasis on a woman's material education. Merish writes, "Although it upholds male power and authority, sentimental ownership, or 'taste,' is envisioned in these texts as the natural property of women, spontaneously originating in the natural love and caretaking of the mother-child bond" (5). Is it the task of domestic manuals, however, to educate and reform women's tastes to perform the same "natural" functions, which suggests, of course, that they were not natural at all. The use of taste, by nature a sensory sensation, to abstract one's physical experience further belies this claim. She correctly notes that, "The tie between sentimental ownership and reproduction is crucial, and clarifies the inextricability of the sentimental history of taste from the history of sexuality" (5). Cookbooks inevitably engage this history because they, unlike their fictional counterparts, require an emphasis on the body, from the processes of manually cooking the food to eating and digesting it. Even the non-food recipes that permeated antebellum cookbooks described the body performing domestic acts, from cleaning silver to writing a proper letter. To abstract this emphasis, cookbooks engaged the rhetoric of nourishment to stand in for physical taste. This allowed them to use the moral and spiritual rhetoric of taste common to sentimental texts, ostensibly without obscuring its meaning. As material guides to nourishment, these cookbooks are an integral part of women's sentimental print culture. The Protestant emphasis on

the material and physical in order to promote the moral and spiritual is nowhere as clear as it is in antebellum Victorian cooking literature.

The concept of one's "appetites" includes a variety of desires and instinctual behaviors, from eating to sex. It is not surprising then, that Victorian writers equate one's food choices with his or her bodily activities and moral state. The mode they choose to control such appetites is another umbrella term: taste. By controlling one's tastes, both physical and cultural, a domestic writer can thus control one's body and mind, or one's private and public activities. Taste marks one's class affiliations, delineates the boundaries of self and other, and provides an entry into public activity, both national and foreign. Taste creates and promotes morality and spirituality, defining women's domestic duties as Protestant evangelism and broadening the significance of domestic print culture to the level of the pulpit. Taste, after all, is not in inherent quality of the recipe, which is a printed representation of bodily activity. Taste is assigned to the recipe based on a variety of flexible social values; as these values change, the meaning of taste changes as well. Thus even recipes are not static. While they are written to standardize domestic activities and produce similar material results, their cultural significance evolves based on evolving social value systems. Domestic experts must standardize a society's intellectual and moral tastes; personal, physical tastes that resist social control are a danger to the designation of Americans as God's chosen people and the future of foreign and domestic power.

The texts discussed in this chapter develop the importance of a woman's control of her domestic environment, which includes both family members and the marketplace. In the Victorian era, women were characterized as agents of morality, tradition, and future. Cookbooks educated women to shape a moral national body by deploying two distinct but connected

rhetorical themes. Some cookbooks stressed evangelical Protestantism and moral reform, made popular especially in the North due to the revivals of the Second Great Awakening a few decades earlier. Others emphasized women's roles as consumers, teaching them to choose material goods that would represent and create "proper" Americans. Domestic fiction often connected the two, which indicates that women understood that these duties were far from mutually exclusive. As stated earlier, food has the ability to connect the reader's conception of her physical body to the significance of an imagined national body. As Victorian social and sexual mores developed into a strict ideology of separate gendered spheres and women's physical bodies withdrew from public view and discourse, taste became further embedded in the realm of discourse, rhetoric, and metaphor. The appetites that specific tastes were developed to control, however, remained a constant fear.

Taste in the Victorian era can be defined in these four texts: Mary Mann's *Christianity in the Kitchen*, Sarah Josepha Hale's *Good Housekeeper*, Eliza Leslie's *Lady's Receipt Book*, and Susan Warner's *A Wide, Wide World*. Each cookbook demonstrates a component of Victorian taste, from Mann's and Hale's biblical debates to Leslie's ardent materialism, while Warner's novel illustrates their mutual deployment in women's popular fiction. Each relies on the evolving use of print to depict and define women's public and private roles. Already established in republican documents as a way to abstract one's corporeal form from the text, print became important for the representation of Victorian womanhood as modest, disembodied, and thus distinctively spiritual. This Victorian rhetoric of taste allowed women to live simultaneously in heavenly and earthly realms, an image depicted in many sentimental novels and religious tracts. As such, cookbooks demonstrate the pervasive powers of evangelicalism and consumerism in all aspects on Victorian society, from the market to the home. In an era that saw increased women's

participation in evangelical social and religious reform, taste became the primary means to disseminate middle-class values.

Chapter 3

"It must be a romance": The Role of Taste in Regional Construction and Reconciliation

Mary Chesnut's Civil War journal has long been considered one of the most comprehensive and complex records of southern culture during the Civil War. Alongside discussions of slavery and social events, Chesnut includes letters that detail the domestic effects of war, in particular the techniques that elite Carolinians employed to use print to nourish a starving population. In her final journal revision before her death, Mary Chesnut includes a letter from her friend Miss Middleton in the entry dated April 5, 1865. In this letter, Miss Middleton implies the lack of food resources, remarking of Chesnut's description of her lavish dinners in North Carolina, "At a certain point in your letter (it was the page about the baked ham and the bureau, the lard and the looking glass, the cake and the candles) as I read it aloud to Mrs. Munro she exclaimed: 'Surely she writes from a dreamland. It must be a romance.'" (Woodward, *Mary* 778). Not only does Middleton herself condense Chesnut's letter to a series of alliterative summaries and refers to it in terms of an imaginative literary genre, but Chesnut's letter--a description of luxury these women had previously enjoyed--is itself a form of imaginative consumption for both reader and writer.

Julia Stern writes of this strategy, "[These women] find that describing remarkable meals from the early years of the war constitutes a restorative diversion; such word of mouth accounts stand in lieu of consuming abundant fare with the various friends and companions who constitute

the audience for such gastronomically themed conversations" (Stern, *Mary* 90). Printed descriptions of food and food memories could stand in for the food itself, following a tradition of physical abstraction common in Victorian women's writing, but presented in a context that is regionally and historically localized. Chesnut is not attempting to make an argument about food or the body as did many northern antebellum moral reformers. In her original letter, she is instead using that quality of print to satisfy a particular physical need through textual intervention. She is also describing both foods and material items that suggest a southern upper-class existence, thus reminding readers of the tastes they suffer to protect. Her inclusion of these techniques throughout her later revisions suggest that food discourse in regional literature has a second important function: Not only can it nourish both mind and body by imaginative consumption, but that same property which made it useful during a time of starvation can be used to unite cultural memory around a particular event. Memory of physical need and survival is at the core of southern identity and Lost Cause ideology; food discourse combines the physical and imaginative senses of "southernness" to produce a powerful emotional identification with place, time, and ideology.

Chesnut began keeping a personal diary when the war broke out in 1861; she recorded her thoughts and experiences of the next four years in this volume, kept locked away from even her husband, James Chesnut (Woodward, Muhlenfeld, *Private* x). Over the next several decades, she worked to revise this document, crafting it into a publishable volume. As Edmund Wilson notes, Chesnut seemed to be writing with "a decided sense of the literary possibilities of her subject" (Wilson 279). Scholars such as Elisabeth Muhlenfeld and C. Vann Woodward have noted that she also composed three full novels after the war, as well as other translations of French fiction and several works of family biography (Woodward, *Mary* xxii). Chesnut was, by

all accounts, well aware of her potential--even her duty--as a domestic writer to shape cultural memory and identity. Her extensive and familiar material detail, combined with her efforts to shape her text into an accepted literary genre, suggest a complex association of physical, material, and literary tastes in southern regional culture. While Chesnut did not set out to write a cookbook, the content and materiality of her journal is nonetheless crucial to understanding the role of the recipe book as cultural capital during this period in American history.

The most powerful illustration of the role of food discourse to nourish and define both individual and community appears later in the same letter from Miss Middleton. She writes, "We have fallen, too, upon a new device. We keep a cookery book on the mantelpiece, and when our dinner is deficient we just read a pudding or a crême. It does not entirely satisfy the appetite, this dessert in imagination, but perhaps it is as good for the digestion" (Woodward, *Mary* 778). The idea that a dish can be "read" implies the complex definition of consumption in Victorian society, described in the last chapter. It also suggests the very necessity of the cookbook for survival and self-definition, both physical and mental. It belies the role of luxury in southern self-definition, suggesting that dessert must be present in imagination if not in physical form. Tastes of the southern elite did not change, then, as a result of the Civil War--what changed were the methods of consumption. The printed food text became integral to one's regional identification when its physical manifestation was unavailable. After the war, when poverty remained and rebuilding began, the cookbook's role of representing a former--or future--identity became even more central in southern literature.

Chesnut's own experiences with deprivation perhaps led her to privilege the role of the cookbook in her revisions. As Chesnut biographer Elizabeth Muhlenfeld explains of her writing, though she began her journal began in "a red, leather-bound diary with gilt edges and a brass

lock, as the privations of wartime cut off supplies she continued her journal in anything she could find, at last recording the bleak aftermath of civil war in the blank pages of an old recipe book" ("Mary Boykin Chesnut Writes Between the Lines"). The transition from the luxurious tastes of the southern planter class to the material needs of the elite as defeat drew near is echoed in the content of her diary. The material and literary conditions of her writing and revisions indicate a series of negotiations with modern identity and economy, a pattern that can also be found in "traditional" cooking texts. This pattern indicates the cultural value placed on food discourse and food texts as a means to convey changing regional, national, and global identity-groups, and to unite these identities around a shared sense of taste in cultural memory.

Chapters One and Two examined Republican and Victorian tastes that their authors promoted as national and nation-building; domestic rhetoric, in other words, promoted the northern home as a representative national space. This chapter will demonstrate an emerging sense of regional identity in domestic texts of the American South. Domestic texts written in the antebellum South tend to participate in national rhetorical trends, with only a few references to southern agriculture, economy, or identity roles based on race, class, or gender. Their purpose is to record local domestic culture to initiate new young housewives, rather than to define a regional identity. While many scholars look to these texts as early records of southern foodways, it is important to that southern identity as a cohesive concept did not yet exist in the minds of these writers. During the Civil War and Reconstruction, however, domestic writing in all regions begins to participate in a broad process of self-definition and preservation. They promoted regional tastes, both physical and aesthetic. While northern texts identify their readers as part of an expansive European literary and intellectual culture, southern texts instead turn inward,

working to preserve an upper-class lifestyle made possible by a plantation economy. Though this aristocracy made up only a small part of southern culture, most domestic texts were written by women with time, resources, and education to record and publish their recipes--namely, those who held positions of wealth and authority in their immediate communities. As such, it is their way of life that is recorded in domestic writing prior to the war, preserved through the war, and romanticized after the war. The wartime invention of the community cookbook allowed large numbers of women to participate in textual production and, in turn, to actively agree to be represented by a particular set of tastes. Reconstruction-era domestic writing emphasized the necessity of southern domestic system for the perfection of a national union. It used the rhetoric of reconciliation romances to distinguish the southern lady as a harmonious blending of resilience and elegance, while simultaneously combining a variety of dishes to represent reconciliation as a blending of regional tastes.

Southern-authored domestic texts rely on a rhetoric of taste that combines the physical with the representational to promote and preserve class- and race-based hierarchies. Taste distinguishes the wife from the housewife, and public domestic reform from private elite education. Its importance in domestic print culture increases throughout the antebellum period until it is finally called upon to define regional preferences during the war and combine them after the war. Taste, in other words, is a vehicle for the cultural work of regional domesticity.

The Problem of Regionalism in Domestic Writing

While most scholars agree that region, ethnicity, and taste share an important cultural bond, the term "regional" is itself somewhat problematic. Richard Gray argues that "[t]he word region is usually applied to an area judged to be on the fringes; regional and regionalist, in turn,

tend to be applied by 'us,' the members of a culturally dominant group, to 'them,' a group or area whose interest very largely stems from its not being at the center of things" (*South* xiii). American cookbook history certainly demonstrates this claim. The "center of things" for antebellum domestic publishing--or indeed, any publishing--was Philadelphia, Boston, and New York. As such, cookbook authors tended to promote northeastern tastes as national, normal, even going so far as to juxtapose their tastes against those of the corrupt South. Sarah Hale observes in *The Good Housekeeper*, for example, that peach skins often lead to indigestion, remarking, "In the southern cities, many bowel complaints are caused by the use of this fruit" (76). Because indigestion is associated with immorality, her claim is not as benign as it might initially appear. Rather, one's consumption of the skins of stone fruits suggests a lack of education in proper eating habits, the inability (or unwillingness) to control one's appetites, and finally, one's incapacity to live a moral life. Applied to an entire culture, Hale's remark is in fact a critique congruent with those of the most ardent abolitionists, that the South willingly corrupts its citizens by relying on a slave labor force that subjugates humans and reduces whites to base animal instincts.[69] Moreover, her critique demonstrates the marginalization of southern texts by a northern authorship and audience. Because diet and evangelical virtue were so inextricably linked in Victorian culture, a southern cooking text was less likely to succeed in a region that was fully convinced of its own moral superiority.

Despite the clearly regional associations of industry, Protestantism, and Victorian womanhood, most scholars do not discuss domestic writers such as Mann, Hale, and Leslie as "regional." Instead, many fall prey to the very illusion of national identity that these authors attempted to promote in their own historical contexts. Gray writes that "[t]o call a text or body of

[69] See Amy Kaplan, "Manifest Domesticity," for more on the racial implications of food choices.

writing 'regional' … is, however innocently, to assign it a marginal status, the measure of its 'regionalism' being the extent of its deviation from the national norm" (*South* xiii-xiv). Most cookbook authors during the antebellum period prescribed national "tastes" through the language of evangelical reform and a belief in manifest destiny, that America represented God's chosen people whose duty is was to bring Christian morality to the world. The South's dependence on slavery, and the consequent morality of its citizens, placed this mission in jeopardy. While the South did have its own "particular brand of Evangelical Protestantism," it tended to reinforce the strict hierarchy of its economic and labor structure; as such, it was often fervently adopted by young women of the planter class (Edwards 19). The middle-class values promoted as normal and traditional by northern evangelicals were not the same as those adopted by upper-class southerners.

Though religious sentiment rarely appears in southern-authored cookbooks, the social hierarchy reinforced by southern religious structures surely informed the advice. Most free southerners--particularly women--attended evangelical Protestant churches. Doctrine preached not only economic but gendered stratification, though men and women could equally become church members. According to Laura Edwards, "Although Evangelical southern Protestants believed that everyone was spiritually equal in the eyes of the Lord, the same did not hold true for matters of this world" (19). Men presided over both upper- and middle-class southern households, just as God--a powerful father, rather than the feminized Christ common in northern sentimental writing--headed a Christian family. Northern Protestant rhetoric located women at the center of a moral household as a response to the corrupt sphere of public industry; southern rhetoric placed men at the head of the household production unit. As such, women's roles included spiritual evangelism as well as submission to the natural authority of white men. The

latter placed them in a similar position to that of African-American slaves. Yet upper-class white women were also called upon to manage slaves and thus represent the Christian morality that whites claimed represented and retained their racial supremacy. These women "accepted their place, equating religious salvation with the ability to fill their appointed roles as wives of slaveholders" (19). While they likely felt the contradictions in their roles as both authority figures and submissive dependents, their domestic writing attempts to reconcile these contradictions in terms of exceptional southern hospitality and culture. Southern exceptionalism increases in cultural imagination as the century progresses, becoming most useful in post-war literature. Early domestic writing described hospitality and slave management in an attempt to supplement the lack of domestic education available to upper-class young women. Later texts capitalized on this reputation as a mark of distinction in order to promote the South's unique regional identity and national contribution. Though antebellum texts presented these roles in a straightforward manner, using a rhetorical stance similar to their northern counterparts' descriptions of managing domestic servants, postbellum texts began to romanticize these features. Like northern domestic writers before them, the Reconstruction South uses domestic writing to suggest its tastes--for refinement, for hardiness, for clear social and economic stratification--are, in fact, national ideals.

The efficacy of a sense of regional exceptionalism is not confined to religious differences. While these underscore the assumption of the moral righteousness of the southern plantation system, the domestic situation produced by the geography and agriculture itself determines much common domestic advice. Antebellum southern domestic writers, most of

whom were part of the planter class, [70] wrote first to describe a local community, rather than a cohesive southern unit. This was in part a result of a rural society in which family units were separated by geographical distance, and in which classes were separated by ideological differences based on farming practices and the degree of independence they allowed. The yeomanry was defined by ownership (of land, tools, or trade), while the planter class based their power on inheritance. The lack of extensive publishing and print networks led families to rely on manuscript recipe collections far longer than their northern counterparts. This practice likely resulted from and perpetuated the importance of "kin," or the family as a self-reliant unit of production and identity.

As southern women, particularly the wealthy, were more isolated from one another than many northern women domestic writers, their sense of purpose, and the resulting purpose of their domestic advice, differed as well. Elizabeth Fox-Genovese writes, "For the vast majority of southerners, including town and many city residents, the ideal community remained grounded in the reality of southern society as preeminently a network of rural-rooted households that contained within themselves relations of production as well as those of reproduction" (80). This dual sense of being both isolated and integrated led to a hybrid mode of domestic womanhood that produced strong local relationships rather than broad regional associations. The distance between homes and the discouragement of women's social networks--like those that led to feminism and abolitionism in the north--led to the confinement of southern women to their own experience. Fox-Genovese writes that rural southern women often "lived their lives within and

[70] The planter class is defined by historians as southerners who owned twenty or more slaves, or southerners who did not own many slaves but who had close ties to the slaveholding elite (Edwards 16). Many wealthy southerners residing in cities, for example, were more likely to hire than own slaves. Edwards notes that, in fact, these urban elite had more in common with a northern middle class. The planter class made up only 12% of the population. Writes Laura Edwards, "The planter class exercised influence over southern society disproportionate to its size."

interpreted their identities through the prism of specific households" (81). Antebellum domestic advice reflects this local emphasis; it is not until the southern states unite as a Confederacy that they must define domestic ideals in opposition to a northern system of moral and spiritual righteousness.

Domestic writing is central to the process of group definition. As both a physical and aesthetic quality, taste has the ability to imaginatively unite bodies in a cohesive group. Amelia Simmons used this quality to unite American women around virtuous national tastes, while Mary Mann suggested a Christian national body through moral control of God-given taste. Likewise, southern domestic writers describe the tastes of the planter class in order to maintain a clear social and economic stratification. Donna Gabaccia writes that food "entwines intimately with much that makes a culture unique, binding taste and satiety to group loyalties. Eating habits both symbolize and mark the boundaries of culture" (8). Cooking literature, then does not only reflect a culture; it marks its boundaries, or *produces* that culture. It is important, then, to view regional literature as part of a process of group formation. In *Ethnic and Regional Foodways in the United States* (1984), Linda Keller Brown and Kay Mussell argue of the difficulty in defining the boundaries of group identity, "groups, both ethnic and regional, are most usefully defined *internally*, using the group's markers of self-identification as key factors" (Brown and Mussell 3, emphasis in original). We must keep in mind, however, that a single-authored text, or even a small compiled text, describes only one group's perspective in a much larger geographical area. Brown and Mussell refer to such units as 'affinity groups,' which are also defined, to an extent, by "voluntary affiliation (based on inheritance or upon proximity)" and are "bounded by the group's definition of itself" (6). As cultural circumstances evolve, the group's definition of itself evolves as well. For domestic texts written in the South, as cultural circumstances require

regional unity rather than small groups of self-contained production, the scope of domestic advice also broadens. For this reason, while it is geographically correct to refer to antebellum domestic texts as southern, this term can be ideologically misleading.

Scott Romine suggests several criteria by which the South as a region has been defined: geographically, economically, ideologically, culturally, historically, and orientationally ("Where" 28). Barbara Ladd adds that "the discourse of any region, including the American South, has never been solely geographical; it is also historiographical, aesthetic, rhetorical, and ideological" ("Dismantling" 53). While we can, in retrospect, see patterns of behavior that scholars have since labeled "southern," these were not necessarily the internal defining factors of the authors in this geographical region. We can, however, use these criteria as an entry point to early examples of potential regionalism, and what these differences tell us about the emergence of regional identification in the nineteenth century.

By cultivating a rhetoric of taste, women writers can demonstrate their group affiliation through their consumer choices, based on shared cultural inheritance and experience as well as geographical proximity.

Defining Their Worlds: Southern Tastes in Antebellum Cooking Texts

Usually studied together, Mary Randolph's *Virginia Housewife* (1824), Lettice Bryan's *Kentucky Housewife* (1839), and Sarah Rutledge's *Carolina Housewife* (1847) form the loose trilogy of antebellum cookbooks often referred to as the *Housewife* texts. These texts are often considered to be the first regional cooking texts due to their geographical designations, and scholars look to them for discussions of southern identity. Yet these authors did not necessarily consider themselves southern. As the following discussion demonstrates, these texts describe life

on an antebellum plantation as far more isolated, local, and familial than later texts intended to represent the South as a unified region. The *Housewife* texts, particularly those written by Bryan and Rutledge, instead provide insight into the process of regional identification and an emerging set of criteria by which later texts would be composed and judged. In their efforts to educate young upper-class housewives, they produce regional tastes that would come to define the region.

Chapter One discussed Mary Randolph's *Virginia Housewife*, which demonstrated the local and global tastes of the Virginia planter class, and Randolph in particular,[71] in opposition to the frugality being preached by leaders in the northeast. Randolph likens the management of a home to the management of a federal government, a variation of common republican rhetoric that gave women a civic, intellectual role in national development. This discussion is also, however, a precursor to the theme of plantation management that underscores later southern texts. While many domestic manuals discuss the role of the white woman in managing a household, in particular its servants, the latter *Housewife* texts--those written by Bryan and Rutledge--use the term "slaves" specifically. This terminology is one of the few indicators of regional difference. It greatly affects the discussion of taste, however, when we consider the deployment of taste in the home itself. Northern writers emphasized the moral implications of taste, or its ability to tempt consumers to eat (or buy) that which might harm their salvation and cultural value. Southern writers, on the other hand, instructed women readers in physical taste, i.e. the correct flavor of specific dishes, as a form of labor management and class performance.

[71] Randolph's individualism distinguishes her text from its successors, which were written when young women were discouraged "from seeing themselves as independent individuals" by the constant presence of both immediate and extended family or "kin" (Edwards 20). Randolph grew into adulthood in the early years of the nineteenth century, which accounts for many of the differences of her manual from the later *Housewife* texts.

While southern women rarely cooked the meals themselves[72] they needed to understand cookery in order to know if tasks were being performed correctly and if the final results were acceptable representations of one's class status.

These texts indirectly emphasize class differences --unlike cookbooks written in the North, which tend to make explicit their recipes' class and economic affiliations--and, when viewed together, give an expansive view of a cohering regional cuisine and its relationship to national tastes. Despite the amount of time between each text's publication as well as the geographical distance between the regions, these writers actively reference their predecessors in their titles, viewing themselves as part of a textual tradition and therefore expanding imagined group boundaries. Randolph, who compiled her recipes throughout her lifetime, finally publishing them in 1824, writes in a clearly republican context. The texts that follow use her title as a model, but demonstrate--moreso than Randolph--an emerging regional, rather than republican, identity. Yet they reference her discussion of the tastes of wealthy Virginia Tidewater families to support their own class affiliations. Both Bryan[73] and Randolph were members of the upper class (though their lives likely differed greatly depending on their regional economies[74]) and their domestic advice reflects the need to manage slave labor and effectively run the home as an individual production unit.

[72] According to Fox-Genovese, southern women did tend to oversee or perform the baking, particularly bread.

[73] We know little of Lettice Bryan, so this claim is based on her ability to write such a comprehensive volume and her access to print technology. Her history, as Bill Neal points out in his introduction to the 1991 USC edition of her book, is not even recorded in the Library of Congress: no birth records, no death records, no marriage records.

[74] The states of the upper South, which included Virginia, Tennessee, and Kentucky, developed hybrid economies based on farming and trade, and often found in more profitable to hire out slaves rather than own large numbers. The economy of the lower South, which included Rutledge's South Carolina, however, was primarily dependent on agriculture, particularly rice, sugar, and cotton.

Both authors identify their texts geographically, by associating their cookbook titles with a state or a specific region. While Rutledge works to define her affinity group internally based on class, agriculture, and geography, Bryan works to satisfy a potentially national audience by recognizing the process of group affiliation, rather than describing her own. Their place-based titles, however, suggest a connection to the local environment required of both an agricultural economy and the woman charged with managing her family's income and diet within the boundaries of a particular plantation unit. The region's increasing difference from the growing industrial economy and urban life of the north also likely inspired these authors to note this differentiation in their titles. Elizabeth Moss argues that "[w]hile northern [women, domestic] writers criticized society in general, blaming the declension of American values variously on men, industry, and urbanization, southern [women] writers were much more specific. Identifying their region as America's last best hope, …southern writers waxed eloquent about the nutritive properties of the southern environment" (Moss 19). Antebellum southern romances, for example, consistently use the trope of a northern woman becoming an advocate for the southern slave system after witnessing the moral influence of the southern environment, rather than the corrupting influence of northern industry.[75] While early cookbooks forego such sentimental language, their emphasis on southern environments, indicated by a prevalence of dishes common to local agriculture, suggests its distinction. These dishes also, however, clearly indicate the class status of the author. Rutledge, for example, concludes her Preface by writing, "In this work are to be found nearly a hundred dishes in which rice or corn form a part of the ingredients" (v). Rutledge, like Randolph, was part of a long line of founders and politicians. Her father, Edward Rutledge, was a signer of the Declaration of Independence, as was her mother's brother, Arthur

[75] For an excellent example of this narrative device, see Caroline Lee Hentz's *A Planter's Northern Bride* (1854).

Middleton. Corn indicates her American identity, as well as her lineage as part of America's founding families; rice, the staple of Carolina plantations, marks her as regional. Her recipe titles also indicate internal group definition based on geography and community contributions. An early series of rice recipes includes Carolina Rice and Wheat Bread, Weenee Rice Bread, Ashley Rice Bread, Beaufort Rice Bread, none of which are found in her contemporary recipe books. Likewise, her corn recipes include the Johnny Cakes and Indian Cakes common to many antebellum cooking texts, as well as the local Owendaw Corn Bread, Chicora Corn Bread, Alexander's Corn Bread, Accabee Corn Bread, and Saluda Corn Bread. Using food discourse, she is able to clearly identify herself and her community, to create an imagined community around shared regional values, and to define her community's tastes by compiling family recipes, thus reproducing and expanding the role of the mother or mistress in a traditional household to include a print audience.

Bryan's *Kentucky Housewife* illustrates the complex negotiation of national tastes and regional associations. The publishers market this text based on its volume and comprehensiveness. They impress upon readers the years of attention to domestic economy[76] that have gone into this text and its sheer volume-- perhaps the largest volume of recipe published "on the western continent," (Bryan v)--to distinguish this text from others of its kind. They must also, however, demonstrate continuity with its predecesors. They note of the recipes themselves: "A considerable portion of them are original; some have been impressed by memory; and others taken from different authors, reduced to practice and improved, carefully avoiding the interpolation of accompaniments, seasonings, &c; and the composition of such dishes, as the

[76] "Believing there have been great improvements in the culinary art, and that there remains an immense space for more, has influenced the authoress to turn her attention almost wholly to the domestic economy of housewifery for the last few years" (Bryan v).

materials, and every condiment of which, are not common in her own country" (Bryan v). "Country," in this context, could indicate either nation or region; publishers likely recognized this possibility when composing their Preface. The sheer volume of her text implies the expectation a large and varied audience. Whereas Randolph's text contains nearly 400 recipes and Rutledge's nearly 600, *The Kentucky Housewife* claims on its title page that it contains "nearly thirteen hundred full receipts, and many more comprised in other similar receipts," meaning variations or adaptations of the recipes and methods she details in full. It demonstrates an emergent southern womanhood by obfuscating the author's voice and thus her specific regional identity.

Bryan's text also references the theme of economy, departing slightly from northeastern asceticism by writing that while some of her recipes are "quite plain and cheap … if economy be consulted, none but what are well worth the trouble of preparing, and that will suit the tastes, and conveniences of many people" are included (Bryan v). As a border state with ties to a range of economies, Bryan treads a fine line by working to cater to audiences with varying group affiliations. Her instructions also illustrate this negotiation. Bryan does not give "the precise length of time to prepare a dish, which must be intuitively perceived by every reflecting mind" (v). The lack of prescribed cooking times suggests readers' familiarity with their local ingredients, techniques, and environmental conditions, a result of group identity based on place. In this way, rather than defining specific group boundaries, Bryan references their importance and works to satisfy all potential audiences. By a lack of prescriptive narrative or clear group affiliation, she illustrates the manner in which domestic writing can be used to form group affiliations.

Writers of domestic manuals praise the South for its clear social hierarchy, which they argue prevents lower classes or races from being anxious or overlooked. Southern cookbooks reflect a planter economy in which the family members have designated roles but all are contained within the sphere of plantation management. Nina Silber explains that upper-class women were never "relegated … to their own autonomous sphere," but instead that "[b]ecause the southern labor system rested on the labor of slaves, southern gender conventions, whether for upper-class men or for upper-class women, did not command the commitment to labor which infused the northern code of economic responsibility in both the home and the workplace" (*Daughters* 8). As such, the maintenance of one's class status in light of local agricultural conditions is more relevant to a cooking text than a sense of gendered duty to reform a society through the deployment of class-based tastes.

In her introduction, Bryan instructs her readers in ways to "fulfill the station of a housewife indeed, and not a wife only" (vi). This rhetoric suggests that a wife will view housework as drudgery, while a housewife will understand its art and significance to one's local community or readers, both familiar concepts in Victorian food discourse. Bryan, however, takes housewifery a step further and enfolds those qualities into the larger framework of being a "lady." She advises readers to "shun the deleterious practices of idleness, pride, and extravagance, recollecting that neither of them constitutes the lady. Never make your husband blush to own that you are his wife; but by your industry, frugality, and neatness, make him proud, and happy to know that he is in possession of a companion who is a complete model of loveliness and true elegance" (Bryan vii). "Loveliness" and "elegance" are terms that rarely appear in her contemporary northern manuals, and suggest an elite reading audience and their preferred class indicators. Though she addresses common critiques of southern pride and

indolence, she works to uphold the aristocracy as the model of domestic taste. In fact, Bryan reminds her readers that a lady must please her guests' tastes: "Just try to learn what your company is fondest of, and have their favorites" (Bryan viii). Her emphasis on physical taste and preference is singular. Rather than choosing dishes to engineer a culture's tastes, one should cater to them, she suggests. This is perhaps the most significant departure from northern manuals, and one that pioneers the growing distinction of southern domestic writing.

Rutledge adopts an intertextual approach to define her authority based on class status. She notes that she does not include directions for basic tasks such as boiling, roasting, etc., as thorough instructions for these can be found in "Miss Leslie's excellent 'Directions for Cookery,' and in many others of a similar character" (Rutledge v). Her use of Eliza Leslie as the cultural norm indicates her own cookbook's class affiliations; of all of the northern cookbook writers during this period, Leslie was perhaps the least concerned with moral reform, and she did not fear that French and English dishes--common in wealthy coastal homes--were too rich for an American population. Rutledge also, perhaps unintentionally, characterizes her own text as marginal or regional, in that it is distinct from the cultural "center," defined as Leslie's popular text.

Rutledge also indicates her planter status when discussing the prized family manuscript receipt books: "the manuscript, in which is gathered a whole lifetime's experience, cannot be in the possession of more than one family in ten" (Rutledge iv). She suggests that future generations of women rarely copy these recipes for their own use and thus their careful instruction is lost to most family lines. Print, however, has the potential to reach beyond one's immediate social circle, and those with access to print can influence the tastes of the region within the scope of a text's circulation. She implies that domestic art is the realm of the upper-

class, who then have a duty to share that knowledge with those who do not have an aristocratic lineage, i.e. the lower to middle classes. The printed domestic text suggests that the southern aristocracy alone can preserve regional tastes and identity. Moreover, it serves as a printed lineage of a region's founding family, further cementing her own importance to the class structure of the area. As food served represents class status to one's guests, printed representations of that food indicates status to readers. Rutledge remarks that her text is a compilation of recipes from "the family receipt books of friends and acquaintances," and as such can reproduce the web of relations that create the plantation family unit. The community represented in her recipe compilation allows readers to participate imaginatively in the life of a planter family, and unites regional tastes around class-based domestic performance.

While northern domestic writing promoted middle-class tastes as the path to social salvation, southern texts worked to preserve the cultural requirement for a powerful upper-class. Though the rhetoric of taste common in southern domestic writing was more closely associated with a sensory experience, it still does not denote individual preferences. Writes Edwards of the planter society, "fine houses and generous entertainment (by antebellum standards) were marks of class standing that wealthy women had to maintain, regardless of their individual preferences" (36). While the ability to easily entertain an unexpected guest is a common trope in antebellum domestic writing, the need to maintain one's class status by means of physical and behavioral tastes structures these southern manuals. Rutledge begins her Preface, "We can hardly call that house a home to which a man dares not carry a friend without previous notice to his wife or daughter, for fear of finding an ill-dressed, ill-served dinner, together with looks of dismay at the intrusion" (Rutledge iii). Again, Bryan's text also includes this image: True economy means a household so regulated that "there will be no danger of being frustrated by unexpected company"

(Bryan viii). Rutledge describes a recipe from an "experienced housekeeper" to cast an illusion over such a dinner: Add "'a clean table-cloth and a smiling countenance,'" though, she remarks, this will not cover all domestic ills (Rutledge iii). She notes that an unsatisfactory dinner will be not soon fade from the memory of any who eat it; as such, women should study culinary and domestic arts.

This imagery demonstrates continuity with the genre of domestic writing as it appears nationally, but its deployment in these southern texts satisfies a slightly different purpose. These authors equate the contents of the table with the woman herself, suggesting that the physical taste of the meal reflects on the tastes of the woman who managed its presentation. By cultivating both sets of tastes, a lady will always be prepared to serve a guest with unfrenzied and "tasteful" hospitality. In the context of southern plantations, this hospitality is not a means to promote the moral righteousness of moderation in middle-class homes; instead, it suggests the "natural" hierarchy of southern society and the ability of a small upper class to sustain power over an expansive region and economic system.

Southern romances often describe luxury as necessary to care for those unable to care for themselves, i.e. the poor or enslaved. Despite efforts to retroactively romanticize the lives of the southern upper-class, plantations were not the lavish homes described in *Gone With the Wind* (1936), or even the memories of mansions described as "dilapidated" in many reconstruction romances.[77] Writes Laura Edwards, "the plantation's primary purpose was production. Of all the buildings that made up plantations, the residence was the least central to this process" (17). Modern readers are often surprised that antebellum domestic manuals advise women in proper

[77] Julia Magruder writes of Margaret Trevennon in *Across the Chasm* (1885), "She lived with her parents on the outskirts of a small Southern town, in a dilapidated old house, that had once been a grand mansion" (2).

plantation management, rather than extravagant decorating or lavish meal preparation. Women's primary purpose on a plantation is to keep production flowing smoothly; they accomplished this by managing finances, keeping track of the pantry and the workers, and ensuring that the man heading the home was free of excess anxiety. In other words, the description of her role was specific, confined to the home but having far-reaching implications. Despite the expectation that they would at some point marry and become mistress of their own plantations, daughters of planters were often unprepared for this domestic life. Their education prepared them to debut their status and attract a mate, not to manage a farming business. Managing slaves and commanding authority--when they themselves were submissive to their husbands--proved to be most women's most difficult task.[78]

Most antebellum cooking texts often mention the roles of servants, and the woman's role in hiring, training, and managing servants. Hale even includes a final section titled "Hints to Help" in her *Good Housekeeper*. Bryan's *Kentucky Housewife* (1839), however, mentions servants "or slaves," a direct reference to the backbone of the southern economy at a time when most northern states had already abolished slavery within their borders. These references, however, are more subtle than those of northern writers explicitly attempting to solve what many referred to as the "servant problem," or undereducated, disloyal servants who created more work for middle-class women than they alleviated.[79] In fact, their very subtlety suggests the normalcy

[78] For more, see Edwards and Fox-Genovese.

[79] In *The Good Housekeeper*, Hale includes an extended anecdote about the benevolence of a "good housekeeper" in training a young Irish servant girl--the most maligned immigrant group of the period--in proper domestic behavior. She footnotes the conclusion of the tale: Julia, the servant, later married and kept a small home based on all of the principles she learned from her employer. As such, the employer not only demonstrated the need for domestic knowledge even when one is wealthy enough to employ servants, but also the ability to domestic knowledge to reform an immigrant group accused of being dirty and uneducated, thus making them more "American. Of course, the story maintains the employers' class

of slavery to the planter class; it assumes that slaves are part of the plantation unit and must therefore be part of a young housewife's education. [80] Once again, however, this discussion also highlights the class affiliations of the author and her intended audience; only approximately one-third of the southern population owned more than two slaves at the time Bryan and Rutledge composed their texts.

The discussion of slave management is inextricable from the discussion of economy in the plantation home. While Child used "economy" to mean "frugal," Bryan, like Randolph and Rutledge, uses it to mean "regulated" and "ordered." A lady, she suggests, will carefully cultivate her management skills to ensure ease for herself and her slaves: "Have established rules for domestics and slaves to be governed by, and fail not to give them such advice as is really necessary to promote their own welfare as well as your own. …Examine frequently your cupboard and other household furniture, kitchen, smoke-house, and cellar, to see that everything is in its proper place, and used in the right manner, that nothing be lost, or wasted by the neglect of hirelings or servants" (Bryan vii). She continues to instruct women that economy means having all resources on hand, and that instructions should be given at an early hour, thus "the lady may be relieved of further trouble during the day" (Bryan vii). She implies that if a lady understands proper plantation management she will protect her authority and class status. Under proper care, slaves will behave properly and will not require harsh words or punishment, which many young housewives are not equipped to give and which could draw criticism for treating slaves harshly, thus undermining one's standing among elite neighbors.

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and racial supremacy by mentioning that Julia and her husband, "a respectable mechanic," moved West and thus did not compete with her employer's status (Hale 124).

[80] Most slaveholding households only owned one to two slaves, and all slaveholding families made up only 36% of the southern population prior to 1850. By 1860, this number had decreased to 26% (Edwards 16).

Southern women grew into adulthood "in the presence of kin"--extended family and neighbors--which "discouraged them from seeing themselves as independent individuals" (Edwards 20). The lack of individualism among upper-class southern women is also indicated by their authorial stance. Both Bryan and Rutledge carefully avoid the use of first person, abstracting their authority by insisting that they represent a culture or, at the very least, that they are tasteful southern ladies who would not impose themselves publicly. Bryan's Preface and Introduction are written in third and second person respectively, with only one exception.[81] The Preface, most likely written by the publisher as this was a common generic feature during the antebellum period, refers to Bryan as "the authoress." While the tone changes significantly in the Introduction, from an advertisement for the merits of this volume to a treatise on the art and joy of housewifery, the author maintains a detached rhetorical stance, referring to the readers as "you" rather than herself as "I." Rutledge's name never even appears on her text as its author: her original 1847 cover page reads, *Carolina Housewife, or House and Home: By a Lady of Charleston*. In her Introduction to the 1979 reprint edition, Anna Wells Rutledge remarks that all editions were anonymous, as a Carolina lady's name appeared in print only three times in her life: "when born, when married, and when buried--the legal necessities" (Rutledge vii). However, she notes, Rutledge's local community--her family and friends--all knew that Sarah Rutledge had compiled the text. Rutledge's authority was thus based on a complex web of interpersonal associations rather than printed demonstrations of expertise. She, like Bryan, is careful to define herself as "a lady," rather by her name.

[81] The author of the Preface writes, "If I say a certain dish must be cooked for one hour, perhaps one will have a brisk fire, another a moderate one, and a third a very slow fire; what will be the consequence?" (vi). After this rhetorical question, the tense returns to the third person, with "the authoress" again being invoked.

This action indicates a broader social transition in domestic womanhood and cultural identity. As sentimental literature in the mid-nineteenth century began to describe the South in terms of its female citizens, and as the defense of their purity and honor became a rallying cry for secessionists and troops, individual women were, in a sense, veiled. Idealized feminine tastes, rather than an individual female, came to define the South in much regional and national rhetoric. During the Civil War, however, when regional identity for both the North and the South began to cohere, cookbooks became a means for women to publicly convey private experiences, and thus to establish community around a shared sense of taste.

Regional Tastes in Civil War Recipe Books

The role of the recipe book during the Civil War is a complicated one. The scarcity of equipment and resources--from paper to publishers--could lead us to assume that cookbooks were at the bottom of the list of publishing necessities. Yet cookbooks and recipe pamphlets provided a much-needed source of practical information as well as reassurance of shared experience of the war-imposed frugality and scarcity, thus working to create regional unity on the home front. Intriguingly, the very materiality of the cooking text made it a precious commodity for a wartime household: commonly published with blank pages for the cook's own notes and adaptations, cookbooks were often one of the few sources of available paper. The very families likely to own such texts were primarily those most affected by the scarcity of the war, particularly in the South. As Civil War diarist Sally B. Putnam wrote of Richmond, Virginia, "It is noticeable … that the class usually known as the poor, was not the class which experienced the most serious inconvenience" (Burroughs 37). In the aftermath of the Civil War, many formerly wealthy southern families were gradually reduced to poverty, and these seemingly benign

cooking texts, instructional and practical in so many ways, retained their position of material necessity in the household.

If northern antebellum cookbooks helped women to balance their spiritual and material roles, the very materiality of the Civil War text served to define its region. Especially in the South, the physical presence of the text, as well as its unembellished instructions, created a sense of common purpose and identity in the newly formed Confederacy. After the war, the same text became a physical reminder of the Lost Cause, a point of identification for a defeated region. These texts are two examples of the *historically localized* cookbook, or a cookbook published to address the needs of a particular historical event, often for a specific region or identity-group. These texts played an important role for both their writers and readers, a role that is exemplified through the narrative elements and materiality of two published Civil War cookbooks, *A Poetical Cook-Book*, published in Philadelphia in 1864, and the *Confederate Receipt Book*, published in Richmond in 1863. Each of these texts was compiled to define a community based on a central cause: to describe the character of the nation its readers wished to preserve. As such, the tastes they promoted were often practical or aesthetic tastes, though they were based on physical need.

The Civil War required both regions to define themselves, not only in opposition to one another as much abolitionist literature had done, but to define what made each region distinctive. It is at this point that we see significant regional distinction in the texts' format, recipe content, and identification practices. Richard Gray argues that the South "has customarily defined itself against a kind of photographic negative … The South *is* what the North *is not*, just as the *North* is what the *South* is not. …The difference with southern strategy is that it usually begins from a consciousness of its own marginality, its position on the edge of the narrative" (*South* xvi-xvii, emphasis in original). Once opposition to northern ideals were finalized in the acts of secession,

the newly formed Confederacy and the abbreviated Union then had to define what they *were*. Secession challenged, even disproved, the northern states' claim that they represented national tastes. While they still promoted their cultural norms as the democratic ideal, they recognized that they did not speak for the nation they wished to maintain. As such, they were required to reevaluate their cultural position in response to the Confederacy's process of defining their "national" character. Adding to the complexity of this process was the fact that now, former regions had became separate nations, and the processes of regional and national identification blended together. Because national self-definition was often a process of defining material tastes, domestic literature quickly took part in this process. The scarcity of resources, however, made it difficult for both regions to publish many domestic documents during the war years. The few cookbooks that were published, though, demonstrate the need of both the south and the north to define tastes specific to their audiences, and to cultivate a sense of regional identity and, by extension, regional loyalty, among their members.

Janice Longone notes that one major development of the Civil War is the emergence of charitable cookbooks ("Community"18). Also called community or fund-raising cookbooks,[82] these texts developed during the Civil War as a way for women's organizations to raise money for soldiers, veterans, and widows. According to Longone, the charitable cookbook soared in popularity "[a]t a time when American women were without full political rights and representation, [and] they found the community cookbook one very effective way to participate in the public life of the nation" (20). It represents a form of what Sara Evans calls "politicized domesticity" in Civil War culture (Bower 30). Community cookbooks are particularly relevant to

[82] While the names are often used interchangeably, not all texts in this category perform all of these roles. Moss' cookbook, for example, is a fundraising text, but was not compiled by a community. *The Confederate Receipt Book*, in the other hand, is a compilation of recipes but was not likely used to raise funds.

the process of regional identification as women contribute recipes and publicly market their text, thus agreeing to be represented by a set of domestic tastes. Whereas a single-authored text illustrates one writer's experience of a region, a community cookbook is far more representative of the region as a whole.

Anne Bower argues that "fund-raising cookbooks are ideologically motivated, in their form as well as their content" (7). As Colleen Cotter notes in her linguistic reading of various commercial and community recipes, community cookbook authors are aware of their audience and use this knowledge the shape the outcome of their texts. They often work to weave in common literary elements of their time, be they romantic poetry or regional fictions, partly to entertain their audiences, and partly to legitimize themselves and their work as printed discourse rather than simply instructional manuals. Bower writes that these women work to, "[balance] generic cookbook characteristics with their own desires for innovation and style" (Bower 4). Though Moss did not personally benefit from the sales of her volume, she was able to demonstrate her literary and domestic acuity and combine these literacies within the space of the text. This suggests that they can also be combined within the cooking space and, by extension, the "domestic sphere." As Lisa Heldke writes, we must not think of cooking as manual labor and reading as intellectual labor; cooking is instead "mentally manual" or a "thoughtful process," especially true when reading becomes part of the cooking act (203). Moss highlights this concept by adding a short excerpt of poetry to each recipe, even including some, primarily alcoholic beverage recipes, written entirely in verse. Each excerpt specifically references the dish to follow, indicating a highly educated writer with a broad knowledge of literature and poetry.

Moss opens her volume with a long poem "To The Reader," in which she describes in verse her purpose in writing: "Yet I another appetite may whet;/May teach him to buy, when

seasons pass'd,/What's stale, what choice, what plentiful, what waste,/And lead him through the various maze of taste" (vii-viii). Moss refers to taste at several points throughout her poem, at all times indicating that it is a quality that must be learned and cultivated by proper education, which she will provide. Her inclusion of these ideas in verse suggests that she is cultivating artistic tastes as well. She makes this point clear when she compares a proper table to a work of art: "Tables should be like picture to the sight,/Some dishes cast in shade, some spread in light;/Some at a distance, some near hand,/Where ease may all their delicace command" (viii). She questions whether cooking can be learned by books, concluding that it is a combination of art and nature.[83] Just as northern Victorian writers worked to make learned tastes appear natural, Moss indicates that both are necessary.

Published on behalf of the Sanitary Fair, an event to raise money for field hospitals, veterans, and widows, Moss' cookbook defines northern tastes as cultured, literary, using poetry to indicate the art and cultivation of its domestic heritage. Of course, this is an ideal, rather than a cultural reality. Nina Silber writes that many northern homes "were plagued by instability and change, illness and death, factors that compromised the blissfulness of idealized domesticity" (*Daughters* 87). *A Poetical Cook-Book* opens with a dedication in which Moss notes that this cookbook was written several years before it was sold on behalf of the Sanitary Fair, so the text is far less historically-influenced than it might be had it been composed specifically for the event. She passionately describes the cause her volume will support: "our suffering soldiers, the sick, the wounded, and needy, who have so nobly fought our country's cause, to maintain the flag of our great Republic, and to prove among Nations that a Free Republic is not a myth" (v). The romantic language of the dedication differs greatly from the rest of the text, which appears as a

[83] "Tis' a sage question, if the art of cooks/Is lodged by nature or attained by books? …When art and nature join, the effect will be,/Some nice *ragout*, or *charming fricassee*" (Moss vii, emphasis in original).

literary intellectual exercise. Also, this dedication provides the only indication that this text is a "community" cookbook, though rather than being composed by a group, it is instead sold by a group. Though we have no indication that women personally contributed their recipes, they agreed that this text could represent the values and needs of their charitable organization, thus creating a text that provided both economic and cultural capital.

Bower suggests that we look for narrative elements in community cookbooks--setting, characters, plot, and themes--to understand how they function as social texts. She notes that while the setting of any cookbook is arguably the home or cooking space, it is also the space indicated by what Cotter calls the "orientation components," or the explanation of the recipe before the instructions begin, as well as any extratextual considerations, such as the purpose for which it is written or the setting in which it is sold. This text is unique in that the conditions of its sale are divorced from its composition, so this framework becomes less useful in interpreting the text. Its major characters are British poets, rather than careworn Union women. Yet its themes match those of later community cookbooks, indicating the beginning of a pattern in this form of expressing women's experience. For instance, all cookbooks of this period highlight women's domestic roles, but charitable cookbooks make these roles necessary for survival, not as a backdrop to men's intellectual, professional, and military pursuits, but something which can ultimately finance those pursuits. Also, Moss' cookbook, perhaps more than any other from the period, represents food as an expression of art and culture, perhaps initially an attempt to define her personal experience, but later adopted to define the identity of Union women, and to represent the cause for which they too are fighting.

The tastes she promotes are those of culture and of industry, but also of establishment. Moss does not quote American poets. Instead, she includes primarily British and continental

poets, and carefully avoids any reference that might discredit her literary knowledge or call into question her understanding of art. Despite a recent surge in American literary publishing, Moss avoids Romanticism's associations with rural life, natural intellect, and rebellion against an established political structure, except where it helps her to establish continuity with America's past. For example, her recipe for Johnny Cakes also begins with a likely source: Joel Barlow's "Hasty Pudding" (1792): "Some talk of hoecake, fair Virginia's pride!/Rich Johnny cake this mouth has often tried;/Both please me well, their virtues much the same;/Alike their fabric, as allied their fame" (Moss 117). Moss not only references a famous patriotic poem during America's founding Revolution, but chooses a verse that addresses sectional tensions regarding the dish, thus making it relevant to the current war and likening their causes--the formation and preservation of the united republic. All of this indicates a high degree of literary knowledge, as she is able to not only quote verse, but find in it specific references to the very dishes she describes. As a representation of the northern cause, she suggests that her compatriots fight to preserve the cultural and aesthetic tastes of the united American nation.

Significantly, this cultural work is not limited to cookbooks published in the North -- though far shorter and more sparse, the *Confederate Receipt Book*, the only cookbook published in the South during the Civil War, attempts to represent and define a struggling Confederate community one year before the publication of Moss' text. It works to uphold the cultural values of southern society as detailed by antebellum domestic writers, but the former emphasis on physical taste and luxury must be reconciled with the lack of available resources and the daily realities of a domestic system no longer able to uphold strict class and racial hierarchies. Preferred cultural tastes compete with physical tastes; as Mary Chesnut described, women

learned to "read a pudding or a crème," as the resources available suggested very different class affiliations.

The *Confederate Receipt Book, A Compilation of Over One Hundred Receipts, Adapted to the Times* was published by West & Johnson in Richmond in 1863. It is a compilation of recipes previously published in newspapers, as well as some personal receipts submitted to the publishers. E. Merton Coulter writes in that it was common for newspapers to publish recipes for those struggling on the southern home front: "Whenever anyone hit upon something that seemed valuable, the secret was not kept, but was published abroad in the newspapers or written down in recipe books or told by word of mouth as an exciting bit of conversation" (Burroughs 7). This cookbook does not only address the needs of a community, but by virtue of being a recipe compilation, it both creates and defines its community. In contrast to Moss' text, however, it is not a fundraising cookbook; there is no indication that the sales proceeds were used to support the Confederate troops. This is due in part to southern gender ideologies. In contrast to northern women's reform societies, southern women tended to view charity "as a largely private matter" to be done individually, often within one's own home (Fox-Genovese 80). To publicly raise money would violate the very terms on which a planter elite based their existence. As such, this text romanticized a cultivated southern identity as much as it served as a practical survival manual for readers unused to scarcity.

The recipe titles themselves often denoted a cause rather than a dish, and served as a narrative of the Confederate culture. In "The Confederate Receipt Book: A Study of Food Substitutions During the Civil War," Frances Burroughs compares Confederate recipes to recipes invented and/or renamed during and after the Revolutionary War. Much like the recipes for "Patriot" or "Election Cake" found in early nineteenth-century cookbooks, the *Confederate*

Receipt Book contains recipes for a "Confederate Candle" and a "Republican Pudding" (a rice pudding, denoting the need for southern states to move away from recipes using wheat flour). These recipes, as well as the cookbooks in which they appear, not only celebrate a new nation--they participate in the job of nation-building. Burroughs notes, however, that the ironic difference of these recipes from those of the Revolution is that while they were created to establish and celebrate a new Confederacy, they quickly came to serve as a memorial for "nationhood lost" (37). The role of this text transitioned from a practical manual written to help families survive especially the final years of the war and the beginning of Reconstruction to a collector's item to commemorate the "Lost Cause" of the South. I should note here that Burroughs' article, though the arguments apply to the 1863 text I discuss, is actually referring to another "Confederate Receipt Book," a handwritten manuscript cookbook that, while it looks as though it was meant for publication, was never actually published. Just as Chesnut's diary was composed in a cookbook, this cookbook was compiled in a former bank ledger. Both texts, much like the recipes they contain, offer substitutes to deal with the problem of "lack" in Civil War culture.

The published *Confederate Receipt Book* contains an appendix that instructs cooks in ways to use rice flour, rather than wheat flour, for baked goods such as breads, cakes, and puddings. This is reminiscent of early British texts such as Susannah Carter's and Hannah Glasse's, which added appendices that catered to American tastes when they realized that traditional British recipes were not serviceable in a new climate and culture. Likewise, when southerners were no longer able to easily acquire wheat flour, they had to rely on what their climate could produce: corn and rice.

These recipes were contributed by an Elizabeth B. Lewis, the only individual name to appear in the entire text, who writes to the Editors of the *Columbus Sun*, "I read an article in one of your papers lately in which recipes for making different kinds of bread with rice flour were enquired for, and having a few that I think will be found very good I send them to you. They were printed in Charleston, S.C., several years ago" (25). Lewis first remarks that the recipes were good; the southern rhetoric of taste formulated by antebellum texts indicates that she means they are both flavorful and successful. Even more intriguing is her use of her own name, particularly in that she is likely a resident of South Carolina and, as Rutledge's manual indicates, this act is rare for a Carolinian lady. Attaching one's name to a recipe in print, or making one's domestic knowledge and life public, might have seemed unfitting for a "proper" southern woman, especially when it is her own name that is printed, rather than that of her husband's (a format we still see in many community cookbooks today). Lewis is likely part of a southern middle-class that quickly recognized the value of domestic advice literature to help southerners adapt to wartime circumstances.[84] In either case, she is not, however, improperly inviting reading strangers into her home--she uses an intertextual approach to guide the editors to another published source of information, thus in a sense acting out in print the wartime tradition on sharing helpful survival strategies. The appearance of her name also indicates Confederate loyalty and pride, or her public declaration of her support for a cause. The historical context makes her contribution culturally acceptable.

The last recipe in the appendix, "Hints for the Ladies," further indicates the value placed on southern femininity as a romanticized but functional ideal. To refer to "ladies" indicates a level of social awareness and status, and indeed the instructions that follow support this reading.

[84] Elite southerners, as Chesnut's letters suggest, often relied instead on antebellum texts to satisfy their imaginative needs, rather than revised or adapted advice to help them endure physical lack.

The receipt begins, “Some of the more economical readers may be glad to have a little advice as how to freshen up a dress of which they have got tired, or which may be beginning to lose its beauty” (27). Readers are told how to embellish old dresses with piping or ribbon to make them look new. If a dress needs to be let out and matching fabric is not available, readers are taught how to add panels of another fabric to be the least conspicuous. Like Scarlett O’Hara’s iconic curtain-dress, “ladies” are taught that economy and vanity need not be mutually exclusive. It even implies that this vanity itself is a form of cultural capital, a way to remind soldiers of the southern culture they are fighting to uphold or preserve. This recipe, perhaps more than any other feature of this text, highlights its later role as an emblem of “Lost Cause” ideology; in fact, we can see its roots emerging before the end of the war.

The recipe book was a form of cultural capital. It allowed women to use their domestic skills to raise funds and thus participate actively in public culture. Yet the recipe book was not simply a financial venture. It also created community--based on a cause, a region, even an emerging Confederate nation--by allowing women to share their knowledge with other women, not just orally, which limits the dissemination of knowledge to a particular location, but nationally, in print. And those who buy this text also gain the knowledge that by informing themselves of how to participate in the home, they are simultaneously participating in a public cause.

Reconstruction on the Home Front: The Cookbook as a Reconciliation Romance

After the Civil War, many southerners sensed “that ‘the Yankees’ were proclaiming their military defeat as a moral one, and offering their now unquestioned political and economic

ascendancy as proof positive of the justice of their original case" (Gray, *Writing* 75).[85] At the same time, they also wished to reconcile with the North and rebuild their lives after the devastation of the war on their natural resources and economy. It became the job of southern literature, particularly domestic literature, to negotiate these dual--and usually contradictory--goals. Domestic writing pervaded southern culture in the later half of the nineteenth century: newspaper columns, magazines, novels, advice manuals--all contributed to the growing cultural dependence on domesticity as a means of southern redemption (Edwards 182).

Southern texts, however, had a difficult task ahead of them. They must reflect a regional audience's pride in a place and a way of life that had been championed to promote support for the Confederate cause. Marketed to a newly reunified audience, however, they must mediate their regional pride by demonstrating a national pride. They also had to work against rigidly stratified class boundaries. While middle-class women, both northern and southern, were the primary audience of domestic writing in the years immediately following the war, women formerly belonging to the elite planter class began to realize its efficacy in rebuilding both the material South and their image within it. Recording southern dishes in print could preserve a regional identity, while offering them to a national audience was the extension of the proverbial olive branch. This act was consistent with the rising popularity of the sentimental subgenre of reconciliation romances written by both men and women, such as John DeForest's *The Bloody Chasm* (1881) in the North and Julia Magruder's *Across the Chasm* (1885) in the South. Cookbooks used both regional tastes and romantic rhetoric to symbolize reunion as a romantic,

[85] Gray is careful to note that the accuracy of Southerners' assessments of northern sentiment is not under examination; what is important is the sense of bitterness, anger, and defeat that spurred southerners to write, defiantly at times, to tell their side of the story.

domestic, even private endeavor, rather than a threatening, masculine, political transaction. They extended beyond legal reunification to demonstrate the necessary emotional and psychological changes that must take place for true union. When placed in conversation with post-war cooking texts, a domestic narrative of reconciliation emerges, one that uses recipes and domestic rhetoric to represent the stages of the reunification process.

In *The Romance of Reunion* (1993), Nina Silber writes that after the Civil War, "As many [northerners] saw it, the northern victory would not be secure until southern whites acknowledged that they had been thoroughly and soundly beaten" (41). Many feared that the South was planning an attack on the Union, and worked "to keep southern manhood in check while keeping the northern model of masculinity in the ascendancy" (42). Pre-war rhetoric painted southern men as aggressive, prideful in their adoption of habits such as drinking and gambling, the very vices northern domestic experts fought against. Both men and women were accused of indolence and unwillingness to perform even the most trifling acts of labor. By the 1880s, however, many northerners "began to view the South and the reunion process more generally, from the perspective of Victorian nostalgia, from a standpoint of growing concern regarding their own society's declining Victorian standards" due to an ever-growing urban industrial economy (9). The South thus became an image of "the idealized feminine sphere" and proper regional reunion would restore "the sense of domestic harmony that northern society no longer possessed" (9-10). While members of both regions actively participated in the process of reunification through fiction, art, journalism, and--of course--politics, it is women's domestic writing that has been perhaps the least studied and yet the most useful in effecting a psychological reunion. By promoting a reunion of regional tastes, women were able to connect both abstract and physical bodies. Susan Kalcik writes, "Since foodways operate at a symbolic

level to communicate information about group membership, status, boundaries, and so on, they would be an obvious choice for symbolic manipulation by individuals and groups who wished, consciously or unconsciously, to make a statement about identity" (54). These symbolic properties extend to food writing, already established as an effective vehicle for group definition and advancement.

Northern cookbooks continued to promote--and to some extent, restore--Victorian values based on pre-war cultural tastes. The recipes themselves varied little, though they gradually incorporated more factory-produced goods and foods, such as canned food introduced during the war (Williams 15). In other words, they incorporated the very products of an industrial system that their moral rhetoric worked to rectify. As the victors, however, they did little to change their domestic views to incorporate their southern counterparts, though they did grow to view the South as a romantic version of their domestic ideal. Silber writes: "the South's feminine identity appeared and reappeared in many different contexts--in the antagonistic discourse of the immediate postwar years as well as in the softer and more sentimental rhetoric of reconciliation" (Romance 6). In the years immediately following the war, the southern woman was represented by northerners as bitter and spiteful, but by the 1870s the gentle and elegant belle imagery had reappeared in common consciousness.

Southern writers, however, recognized the value and necessity of domestic rhetoric to restore not only their role in the nation but their former way of life. Writes Edwards, southern domesticity "acquired public overtones. Many of its devotees actually viewed it as a social mission" (183). They knew that in order for their efforts to be widely circulated, they would need to publish with large northern printing firms. This required a careful rhetoric of reconciliation that included "Americanizing" southern recipes or instructing women to adopt a northern work

ethic. For example, *Mrs. Hill's New Cook Book*, published in New York in 1873, is a Georgia cookbook dedicated to helping young housewives learn to perform the domestic duties that had formerly been the tasks of slaves. *Housekeeping in Old Virginia* (1877), a community cookbook compiled by Marion Fontaine Cabell Tyree, granddaughter of Patrick Henry, was originally published in New York but was later reissued in Richmond and Louisville, and demonstrated the state's long history of national participation. *Mrs. Porter's New Southern Cookery Book* (1871) was published in Philadelphia and written by a Virginia lady intent on using food and recipes to participate explicitly in reconciliation. As it was primarily southern authors participating in domestic reconciliation, this chapter will examine this process as it appears in several representative southern texts.

The first job of southern domestic writers was to place their region in a national context. In *Mrs. Porter's New Southern Cookery Book*, for example, the publisher's preface is typical for an American cookery text, in that there is nothing explicitly regional about it. It claims that it corrects the faults of its predecessors, such as unclear recipes or an over-emphasis on luxury, and that it educates housewives in the "culinary department" in order to ensure the health and happiness of families that could otherwise be marred by improper cooking or domestic management. They also reference economy in housekeeping, a constant in nineteenth-century cookbooks: "In many cases, while giving the more elaborate and expensive mode of making certain articles, we have added cheaper and scarcely inferior methods" (Porter iv). All of these point to the desire to promote this text as a cookery book distinguished by its content rather than its regional orientation. Most tellingly, the Philadelphia publishers refer to it as "Mrs. Porter's New Cookery Book," leaving the "Southern" of the title out of the preface entirely (iii). Though Mrs. Porter is Virginian, her text initially appears to be decidedly *not* regional.

Rather than deemphasizing her regional identity, Marion Tyree instead highlights it to develop Virginia's role in early American history. She writes that colonial Virginia was known among the colonies for the "beauty and richness of their living," but that "when at length her great son in the House of Burgesses sounded the cry for war, …her daughters, not to be outdone either in service or patriotism, set about at once the inauguration of a plan of rigid retrenchment and reform in the domestic economy, while at the same time exhibiting to their sisters a noble example of devotion and self-sacrifice" (vii). Tyree implies that women passionately performed their civic duty to the new American nation during the Revolution, and can do so again. She also refutes the northern accusation of indolence and extravagance, writing that women cast their luxuries "as offerings into the lap of the Continental Congress" and worked instead to perfect a new domestic system, famed for its "beautiful and elegant simplicity" (vii-viii). This system, she argues, combines "the thrifty frugality of New England with the less rigid style of Carolina" and is thus "the very perfection of domestic art" (viii). Not only does she overtly reference the job of domesticity in reconciliation, but she argues that a domestic compromise will perfect American domestic arts, satisfying both northern women who fear the immorality of an industrial society and southern women who must learn to perform domestic duties within an unfamiliar economy and labor system.

Annbella Hill, author of *Mrs. Hill's Practical Cookery and Receipt Book*,[86] was like most southern domestic writers, part of a wealthy southern family, though according to Damon Fowler, "her world was that of rural, almost frontier, western Georgia" (xviii). Her cookbook, however, enjoyed immense national popularity, remaining in print for three decades and

[86] Hill's text was reprinted under a variety of titles, among them *Mrs Hill's New Cook Book* and *Mrs. Hill's Southern Practical Cookery and Receipt Book*. Because, as Damon Fowler notes, her text contains primarily antebellum recipes, it would be incorrect to assume that Hill initially viewed herself as speaking on behalf of a unified region.

appearing as far north as Maine (xix). Yet unlike Porter's and Tyree's texts, Hill's reconciliatory efforts were in her introduction and intertextuality; her recipes, likely collected prior to 1865, were old-fashioned and often of English origin. Even recipes from southern sources represented antebellum luxury rather than Reconstruction scarcity. She was careful to cite her sources of influence, however, and thus we know that she relied on recipes from Randolph, Hale and Leslie, thus demonstrating her continuity with antebellum cooking texts that posit themselves as national, rather than regional. She also demonstrates extensive knowledge if Rutledge's *Carolina Housewife*, which was quite popular in Georgia and includes many specifically regional recipes (xxv). The perspective outlined in her introductory comments, however, works to refute romantic imagery that she believes hinders southern progress and rebuilding: "The days for romance have passed, if they ever existed; the night for the dreamy visions of elegance and luxury in connection with a life of indolence has suddenly given place to the day of enterprise and industry" (6). Such a statement illustrates a decidedly northern sentiment, which she continues, asking, "What shall be done to bring back the good old times, when a knowledge of the good housewifery demanded for the health and comfort of every family was not considered too low for the attention of any lady?"

The taste for luxury currently characterizing the South is in fact denying the reality of southern heritage, she argues. Her use of domestic experts such as Sarah Rutledge reminds her readers that the system of taste set in place by antebellum writers was not one of extravagance and ease, but of order and proper management. She implores readers to "Pluck from the hand of the destroyer the premium awarded to idleness and give it to industry" (7). Yet like Marion Tyree, she argues that southern character will aid women in their new efforts: "A crisis is upon us which demands the *will* and *energy* of Southern character. Its prestige in the past gives earnest

of a successful future" (6). Women should not view themselves as reduced for doing tasks that were one assigned to slaves, she writes (7). Women who were once queens of the parlor can now be queens in the kitchen and perform whatever labor becomes necessary for the health and happiness of their beloved region (6).

Hill's rhetoric is reminiscent of northern antebellum writers; this is in fact a reconciliatory tactic in itself. Jane Censer writes that an intriguing aspect of the writing of upper-class southern women after the war was their fascination with the North and northerners (246). She notes that this likely occurred because the urban North provided a sharp contrast to the poverty and devastation of southern society, both the primarily rural landscape as well as the few major cities. Likewise, Nina Silber describes the northern experience of victory and their subsequent imaginings of the South. Of the North, she writes: "Confronted with the haunting specters of class conflict, ethnic strife, and alienation that their own industrialized society had produced, many northerners remained unconvinced about the benefits of industrial progress and about obliterating whatever remained of the old southern legacy; in many ways, they were unconvinced as to the unqualified benefits of the Union victory. Sectional union could thus offer a bridge for northern ambivalence, between a modern and a premodern world" (*Romance* 5-6). Meanwhile, while much of the romantic southern imagery we have come to associate with late nineteenth-century plantation tradition was actually a product of the antebellum period, post-war southern writers often deployed these images to provide "white southerners with an emotional vehicle that had profound religious, psychological, and social function--functions that were especially suited for a society that suffered from defeat, humiliation, and internal dissention" (5). Recipes and domestic writing, which allowed women to demonstrate their authority and extend it

in print to a large reading audience, had the unique ability to permeate emotional rhetoric and demonstrate the daily realities of a functional domestic union.

Reconstruction-era domestic writers often used their recipes to illustrate domestic reconciliation. They combined traditionally southern recipes and famed New England dishes to demonstrate a union of regional tastes. Marion Tyree's cookbook, containing "contributions from two hundred and fifty of Virginia's noted housewives" is a community cookbook and thus, like its Civil War predecessors, an example of a community representing itself through food writing. This makes the recipes included particularly significant as they represent a group's cultural tastes and preferences, rather than that of a specific person. Many of the recipes include the state in the title: Old Virginia Loaf Bread, Old Virginia Batter Cakes, and Virginia Ash Cake. Like many community cookbooks, she includes multiple recipes for the same type of item, demonstrating its importance to the region. For example, she includes five recipes each for oyster soup and scalloped oysters, and many for other fish and shellfish, indicating a continued emphasis on local agriculture and ingredients. Though her recipes do not overtly engage a northern readership through her titles, she relies on Virginia's central role in American history, and thus recipes such as Hasty Pudding and Sally Lunn, which indicate that heritage.

Recipe titles also play a role in reconciliation, regardless of the physical product they completion will produce. A brief glance through the Table of Contents of Porter's text shows that while she includes some explicitly southern recipes, such as Southern Gumbo or New Orleans Gingerbread, she includes many recipes that represent other regions and cities, such as Philadelphia Buns and Albany Cakes.[87] The recipe titles span the country's regions and history;

[87] Incidentally, these recipes also represent the city and state that published her book, Philadelphia and New York, and are potentially an act of marketing her text to publishers, if not a publisher's requested addition.

unlike antebellum texts, Porter's recipes are not limited to a specific place. Instead, she includes recipes with ingredients found primarily in the South, such as Hominy Waffles and Buckwheat Cakes, but she also names many of her recipes after southern cities and towns, such as Charleston Cake. More than any other Reconstruction-era domestic writer, Mrs. Porter demonstrates the utility of domestic print culture in the nation's reunification efforts.

Recipes Narrate the Reconciliation Romance

The most intriguing recipes in Porter's book, and those that have the most literary significance, are the cake recipes that, in sequence, describe the formulaic stages of a literary romance. While some recipes, such as "Kisses," are common dishes that appear in other cookbooks, most are not. Porter's act of grouping them in a narrative series indicates a level of meaning removed from their function as cookery instructions. The recipes in the romance sequence are: Bachelor's Cake; Ancient Maiden's Cake; Introduction Cake; Acquaintanceship Cake; Quiz Cake; Sweet Drops; Flirtation Cakes; Love Cakes; Kisses; Rival Cake; Jealousy Puffs; Love Cakes, No. 2; Engagement Cake; Wedding Cake; Very Rich Wedding Cake; The Little Folks' Joys (236-242). Louis Szathmary writes that "each cake's name could be a chapter heading in a large Victorian novel printed in monthly installments in *Harper's*, *Leslie's*, or some other literary monthly of the time" (ix). While this is certainly true, and a strong argument for the practice of reading cookbooks as literary documents, these recipes suggest a greater significance when placed alongside the genre of the reconciliation romance. They also demonstrate the complex negotiation of physical and aesthetic taste that is at the core of southern domestic writing.

In “Marriage Plots and National Reunion,” Karen Keely examines the genre of the reconciliation romance and its post-war popularity. Inter-regional marriage as a representation of national harmony is in fact, she notes, a trope of antebellum literature, often employed to demonstrate why war was unnecessary. In many cases, this marriage involved a southern male planter and a northern woman with abolitionist leanings. Many romantic or sentimental novels, published in all regions, discussed the ability of marriage to alter a northern woman’s opinions of slavery, as the care bestowed upon slaves by kind masters satisfied her Protestant reform sensibilities. After the war, many authors revived this trope to demonstrate the need for emotional and psychological healing, rather than military action or extended legal measures. In its postbellum manifestation, however, the marriage usually took place between a northern man, a representative of the powerful national “center,” and a southern woman, a representative of marginalized “region.” Southern women’s sacrifice of fathers, husbands, brothers, and sons, according to post-war sentiment, made them far more bitter, resentful, and unwilling to forgive their Union “invaders.” Southern women were often considered “the backbone of the Lost Cause doctrine,” a concept that explains the post-war veneration of *The Confederate Receipt Book* (4). The role of women in the act of reconciliation demonstrates not only the impact the war had on regional domesticity, but also the impact domesticity must have in the future if peaceful and successful reconciliation were to be accomplished. Writes Keely, “If a cold Northerner and a fiery, resentful Southerner could survive courtship and eventually find marital tranquility, the argument ran, could not the nation as a whole mirror their domestic peace?” (2).

Silber writers that the “image of marriage between northern men and southern women stood at the foundation of the late nineteenth-century culture of conciliation and became a symbol which defined and justified the northern view of the power relations in the reunified

nation" (*Romance* 7). While these romances were popular on a national level, Jane Censer argues that southern women varied the traditional reunion romance formula. Though northern writers often lampooned the South and southern male writers emphasized the antebellum period and military heroism, Southern women writers worked to "criticize southern society without caricaturing it" (Censer 64). The southern woman chose the northern suitor, usually from among a cast of several, allowing the author to represent regional differences through her characters. Yet southern women incorporated a sense of cultural relativism into their texts: the romantic pair often learned mutual appreciation of one another's region and represented the best character that region had to offer. In the context of her reconciliatory cookbook, Mrs. Porter's series of recipes represent the necessary stages of a successful inter-regional romance.

Julia Magruder's *Across the Chasm* is an example of a southern reconciliation romance that, like Porter's recipes, follows the generic formula exactly. Whereas later texts, such as Thomas Nelson Page's *Red Rock* (1899) varied this romance formula as a means of cultural critique, Magruder--like Porter--demonstrates the efficacy of the formula to illustrate domestic reunion. In this novel, southern heroine Margaret Trevennon must choose among four male suitors: fellow southerner and childhood companion Charley Somers; aggressive Lost Cause devotee Major King; polite, well-connected, but of questionable moral character cousin Alan Decourcy; and intelligent, artistic northern architect Louis Gaston. Of course, Margaret ultimately chooses Gaston, but not before she has helped him understand the value of southern culture. Magruder's text is by no means singular; for this reason, it provides an excellent example of the literary union represented by Porter's recipe sequence.

Porter's recipes progress from Bachelor and Ancient Maiden to Little Folks' Joys, or from confirmed separation to sexual union. In its fictional representation, Margaret and Louis

both begin with pride in their individual regions, though Margaret is dissatisfied with southern men and Louis is firmly decided against southerners. Margaret's cousin Eugenia Gaston, in fact, invites her to Washington, D.C. to cure her brother-in-law, Louis, of his regional prejudice. This indicates the necessity and willingness of southern women in the process of reunification, as well as the ability of women, rather than men, to enact a psychological reunion by reaching across regional boundaries. Though Margaret is happy to be a southerner, she yearns for men with professional ambitions, who use their talents and are not "indolent," as she describes Charley. Reduced to a series of stock characters with clear regional representations, Magruder makes her purpose all the more clear. Charley comes from "a long line of affluent and luxurious ancestors, and though cut off from an inheritance in their worldly possessions, he had fallen heir to many of their personal characteristics, which hung about him like fetters of steel" (4). Margaret tells him that she "will never give up wishing that [he] would be a man, and do something worthy of a man," a direct reference to the northern emasculation of southern males as a means of denying the perceived threat of the embittered South. This threat was embodied in Major King, of whom Margaret muses, "though a familiar type of Southern man, he was not a favorable one. …He belonged to a class she knew well--men whose range of vision had been limited, but who were possessed of a feeling of superiority to others in general, and an absolute conviction of superiority to the best Yankee that ever lived" (89). Louis quickly appears to be the only viable option for Margaret's future happiness, which, according to formula and recipe, is exactly the prescribed outcome.

The various stages of the romance--Introduction, Acquaintanceship, Quiz, Flirtation--are all represented by recipes for cakes or other sweets, famous in southern cookbooks for the sheer volume of these types of recipes. It is not unusual for southern cookbooks to devote over half of

their pages to desserts or sweets, another reason why northern domestic experts often criticized the region. Hale referred to the sweetness of fruit alone as an "Eden taste,"[88] and advised that mothers should not tempt their families with desserts that they could not resist (they instinctually had a "taste" for them, she argued) but would make them overly full and give indigestion. It is also expensive and thus is placed outside the realm of middle-class tastes. Sugar, however, is found more readily in southern cookbooks due both to the proximity of sugar plantations and the wealthy authorship of antebellum cooking texts. Porter's emphasis on dessert recipes further marks her text as southern, while her recipe narrative suggests participation in an inter-regional literary trend.

Like Porter's recipe narrative, the reconciliation romance plot (and the real emotional process it represents) requires rivals and jealousy, to serve both as contrasts to the obvious northern hero and to make the hero recognize the value of the heroine. Margaret's polite, compassionate, but determined southern behavior appears even more desirable next to that of Somers and King, while Louis' intellect and sensitivity, as well as his sexual purity (demonstrated by his ability to resist the married vixen, Mrs. Vere), upholds Victorian values for both men and women. Yet Louis' jealousy and prejudice anger Margaret, who grows indignant at his rude and tasteless behavior toward King and Decourcy: "Children and savages regulate their manners according to their tastes and fancies," she tells him, "but I had always supposed that well-bred men and women had a habit of good-breeding that outside objects could not affect" (132). Here Magruder clearly invokes the rhetoric of Victorian womanhood, made popular by Mary Mann and Sarah Hale, and later invoked by Annabella Hill, which argues that it is the job of the true woman to cultivate the tastes of children and help them transition from a savage to

[88] See Chapter 2, page 1.

civilized state. She combines it with a southern view of "natural" good breeding, or the inherent power of the aristocracy based on innate--rather than learned and thus unstable--values.

Magruder's novel implies the ultimate marriage and sexual union of Louis Gaston and Margaret Trevennon, while Porter's recipe series indicates its requirement. By ending the sequence with not only a wedding but children, this sequence satisfies the most important element of the romance plot: the reproductive union that results in children who are not northern or southern, but American. Just as a reconciliation romance ends with an implied sexual union, joining two regional bodies, southern cooking texts unite bodies through the simultaneous experience of blended regional tastes. By combining regional dishes in the same southern cookbook, these domestic writers present a metaphorical union, and the power of the feminized south to influence the nation. Ingesting one another's foods is an intimate, bodily act, and is thus the culinary equivalent to the marriage that unites North and South in domestic romances.

This series of recipes indicates the progress of southern tastes from a developing regional womanhood found in antebellum domestic writing to its deployment as a reconciliatory tool in inter-regional romances. Though taste begins as a sensory experience meant to ensure one's class status, it becomes an aesthetic representation of the need for that status to adapt to changed cultural circumstances. Intriguingly, it is still domestic writers who work to demonstrate this transition to a widening and increasingly variable population. As we will see in the next chapter, romantic rhetoric is also deployed as a response to the Progressive impulse and the perceived threat to white racial authority and dominance.

Regional identity goes beyond its geography and agriculture, beyond its cultural values, beyond even its history. As domestic writing demonstrates, regional identity is not a fixed

concept, either for a population or a historical moment. Nor is it an end in and of itself. The authors described above struggle to define group affiliations and tastes for a variety of purposes: to educate young, inexperienced housewives; to maintain class status; to perpetuate the necessity of a planter elite despite composing only an extreme minority of the population; to rally a disparate group around a central cause; and to promote one's cultivated values as essential to a victorious region ready to write them off as a threat to national unity.

As domestic writing played a prominent role in defining tastes of the country before the war, these texts were essential, even crucial, to the understanding of the physical and aesthetic tastes, hence the cultures, of the Union and the Confederacy during the Civil War. In the post-war restoration period, domestic writing represented the stages of the reunification process. Cultural memories were defined. Values of the North and the South whose differences were championed during the war had to be reconciled after the war. Domestic writing addressed the challenge of re-forming the nation in the midst of the paradox of the imagined South and its daily domestic realities. These authors recognized that the most effective reunion would take place where its importance most touched everyone: the home.

Chapter 4

Aesthetics and Euthenics: The Intellectual Labor of White Domesticity

In the summer of 1893, 27.5 million visitors attended the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago. Spread over 633 acres, visitors were presented with over 65,000 exhibits displaying everything from electricity to musical acts, new technologies to new food products, such Quaker Oats and Pabst Blue Ribbon beer. Angered at their lack of significant representation at the previous exposition, women requested and received funds for a women's board; Bertha Honoré Palmer, wife of successful Chicago businessman Potter Palmer, was elected President of the Board of Lady Managers. Palmer's vision for the World's Fair included a Woman's Building, in which women would demonstrate the newest products, technologies, and cooking techniques available to the American public. Palmer's vision, however, competed with several other versions of domesticity, all presented to a global audience between May and October of 1893.[89]

The Woman's Building brought together renowned cooking school teachers Juliet Corson of New York, Maria Parloa and Mary Lincoln of Boston, and Sarah Tyson Rorer of Philadelphia, along with countless others who gave daily cooking demonstrations to an avid crowd. Palmer had designed a Model Kitchen, complete with the newest domestic technologies such as a hand-powered mechanical dishwasher, and a Model Pantry that included many processed "shortcuts"

[89] In the case of Richards' Rumford Kitchen, between August and October.

for modern domestic women. The Model Kitchen was a success with fairgoers, attracting over 225,000 visitors, most of them women.

Missing from the Woman's Building, however, was the leader of the prominent domestic science movement, MIT graduate and professor Ellen Richards. Though asked by Palmer to organize the cooking demonstrations, Richards refused to house her exhibits in a building that she believed would attract women only. Scientific cookery, she argued, should not be gendered; domesticity was a public issue and should not be relegated to a physical representation of a "private sphere" of women's activity. In the end, she raised enough money to construct a small house near the Anthropological Building which she named the Rumford Kitchen, modeled after public kitchens opened throughout the northeast which served and instructed immigrant families in proper diet and cooking techniques. She sold over 10,000 meals and demonstrated scientific cookery to an uncounted number of visitors. With each meal, Richards handed out a nutritional guide as well as leaflets composed by leading scientific minds of the time, both male and female. Called the Rumford Leaflets, they were so popular that six years later she had them bound and published under the title, *Plain Words About Food: The Rumford Kitchen Leaflets* (1899). While Palmer's Model Kitchen attracted more visitors due in part to its more central location, Richards' Rumford Kitchen attracted a more varied audience, both men and women, many who served institutional populations and who later put her techniques to use in the public sector (Lippincott 159-60).

Also missing from the Woman's Building were any African-American representatives. Though two African-American women's organizations, the Women's Columbian Association and the Women's Columbian Auxiliary Association, had actively petitioned the (all-white) Board of Lady Managers for representation in the fair's exhibits, they were eventually required

to take their petition to the federal government with accusations of racism on the part of the Board. In response, the fair commission awarded six African-American women—among them Frances E.W. Harper, Hallie Quinn Brown, and Anna Julia Cooper--the opportunity to address the World's Congress of Representative Women (Foster 180). These women wished to demonstrate to the world the advancement of African American women from domestic service to middle-class intellectuals. Cooper and Harper were well-known authors, for example, and Hallie Brown had served as Dean of Women at Tuskegee Institute. Yet the Board of Lady Managers had chosen instead to publicize their inter-regional composition; the ability of white northern and southern women to work together for a common goal could represent to the world the potential and success of reconciliation (Wallace-Sanders 63). Most southern women in particular could not imagine working in tandem with black women whom they viewed as capable only of domestic service, not of intellectual thought.

In another part of the Fair, the R.T. Davis Mills Company had hired Nancy Green to play the role of their newest marketing figure for boxed pancake mix, Aunt Jemima. Nancy Green, a working class African-American woman and former slave from Kentucky, stood in direct opposition to the black intellectuals speaking to the Women's Congress. Aunt Jemima instead played into the inter-regional romance suggested by the composition of the Board of Lady Managers: "Aunt Jemima and her pancake recipe were reconciliation gifts from the South to the North; reunification meant they could now share her as a southern prize: a mammy for the national household" (Wallace-Sanders 66). Reconciliation romances were still common in the 1890s, as the nation worked to resolve its economic differences and emotional hostilities. Whereas middle-class, educated African-American women like Cooper and Brown represented

potential rifts in the American social fabric, Green's "happy slave" performance suggested an antebellum national family, the unified image the fair organizers wished to promote to the world.

These four scenes represent four important trends in domestic writing in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. Domestic scientists promoted science and nutrition as the means of defining and fortifying the nation's middle class and reforming the labor practices of the American working class. They worked to make domesticity a public issue by stressing its economic and professional significance, rather than its traditional gender associations. As the domestic science movement advanced the application of science and technology in women's daily lives, many writers adopted its rhetoric to promote their own domestic agendas. African-American women used domestic science rhetoric to illustrate their status as middle-class businesswomen and intellectuals. White southern authors capitalized on the national popularity of the Mammy as a unifying symbol to hinder racial progress and distinguish their region from national domestic reform activities. The 1893 World's Fair displayed this variety of domestic behavior to a viewing public; cookbooks published during these decades preserved their performances in print.

By the final decades of the nineteenth century, advancements in print technology and increased literacy rates brought with them an increased awareness of the potential of the cookbook as a literary genre as well as tool of social reform. The cookbook market had become enormously varied, composed of a diverse group of authors with wide-ranging purposes. Each group recognized the cookbook as a symbol of middle-class status, domestic expertise, and cultural ownership and authority. This chapter examines three variations on the domestic science model of domesticity. Each works to strengthen the middle class based on native-born white,

primarily northeastern standards. Domestic scientists emphasized the importance of differentiating the diets of various races and classes in order to produce efficient laborers, both physical and intellectual. Cooking schools and their publications, often based on domestic science principles, catered to a middle-class audience, thus reinforcing class boundaries through the intellectual labor of diet based on nutrition, rather than desire or taste. Finally, Catherine Owen's novelized cookbooks combine domestic science and the cooking school experience with the seemingly un-Progressive rhetoric of French gourmandism and aesthetic taste. Yet her purpose is consistent with that of the domestic science movement: to teach women not only the necessity of domestic skills, but their economic and cultural implications for the woman as an individual and for the future of (white, middle class) society.

This chapter centers around three arguments concerning the concept of taste in cookbook rhetoric in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. First, many scholars and food historians argue that the domestic science movement caused the downfall of the American palate.[90] They argue that these women's efforts to standardize and professionalize national cuisine removed taste from cookery and consumption, and removed distinguishing flavors from regional cuisines, in favor of a scientific and increasingly corporate food culture. This dissertation has argued that, in fact, taste has been an effective rhetorical concept since the origins of American food and domestic writing, and that the physical tastes and preferences of the individual have always been perceived as threatening--or at best, counterintuitive--to larger domestic projects of regional or national cohesion. This is due in part to the development of early American print culture as disembodied and therefore able to create community by reaching a

[90] These authors include Laura Shapiro, Harvey Levenstein, Glenna Matthews, and perhaps most famously John and Karen Hess, who refer to the period in history as the "rape of the American palate" (Chapter 1).

larger and more varied group of readers than oral or manuscript culture. It is also due to American food culture's development based on ideology and identity, as settlers feared unfamiliar food items would compromise their British identities and colonists later used those same items to represent a burgeoning American cultural pride. In short, the stage had been set for the domestic scientists' removal of taste from the eating process long before their emergence at the end of the nineteenth century.

The second argument on which this chapter's exploration of Progressive-era domestic texts is based is that this era marks a second wave of American domestic publishing, one that differs from the somewhat homogenous rhetoric of their Victorian predecessors. Kathryn Sklar described the "manual mania" of antebellum Victorian society as the first wave of popular American domestic writing.[91] While Victorian domestic ideologies and their rhetoric of morality and purity tended to dominate women's domestic publishing throughout the nineteenth century, Progressive-era domestic writing expands, varies, and even at times contradicts Victorian mores. While Victorian experts worked to define taste as adherence to a set of middle-class moral values, simultaneously natural and learned, Progressives recognized the social utility of manipulating taste for a variety of purposes. Taste in the Progressive era, in other words, became publicly recognized as a malleable, rhetorical concept, available to anyone who wished to use it.

The malleability of taste, however, did not prevent the powerful middle class from continuing to use it as a means to fortify class boundaries in an era of reform. In fact, the Progressives, participants in a variety of reform movements, were primarily white middle-class Americans working to contain the threat to their positions of cultural influence and access to capital. These threats came from two related fronts: African-American racial progress and a

[91] See Chapter 2.

wave of immigration, largely into northeastern American cities, spanning several decades. Grace Elizabeth Hale notes that the political disputes following the Civil War, which also institutionalized regionally-integrated "economic trends toward centralization, standardization, urbanization, and mechanization" led to an uncomfortable lack of unity regarding the general representation of "American collective identity" (6). While "identity" is an ambiguous category, and "collective identity" is both superficial and inevitably exclusive, literary attempts at reconciliation demonstrate that, at least for some portions of the population, psychological unity by means of defined "American" identity was an important component of post-war culture. She continues: "The overlapping of the aftermath of the Civil War and the fate of the ex-slaves with these economic changes destabilized the categories of power during the 1880s and 1890s. The question of what structure of social order would replace the familiar hierarchies of both North and South made this a period of volatility and uncertainty" (6). Race "became the crucial means of ordering the newly enlarged meaning of America" (7). Communities of farmers, businessmen, scientists, domestic experts, former Confederates, etc., began to represent their collective identity and boundaries primarily through racial designations.

Not all racist behaviors were directed toward African Americans, however, Nearly 30 million European immigrants had come to America since the 1820s, the majority of them in the period from 1880-1920 (Diner 1). Most were poor, hungry, looking for work, and—according to Progressives—practiced living and eating habits that designated them as vulgar, dirty, and poorly educated. They were grouped, along with African Americans, as racial and class "others" by white domestic Progressives. Reform activities, particularly those regarding diet and domestic behaviors, were aimed not at lifting these groups to white middle-class status, but at fortifying group boundaries and strengthening class-based differences to protect against cultural invasion.

Progressive Domesticity

Progressivism arose as a response to a variety of social problems, almost all of them relevant primarily to city life. Increased industrialization, corporate monopolies, unequal distribution of wealth, urban poverty, immigration, economic depression: all of these led to an almost universal outcry for social and political reform. Following the Gilded Age, so-called because it was an era characterized by extreme decadence on the part of a small but public upper class, Progressives sought to alleviate what they considered to be the results of unchecked wealth and power. Previous government anti-regulatory policies had allowed for the ability of a few to amass large fortunes, while many American families lived at or below the poverty line. Reform societies had been in place since the early republic and flourished during the antebellum period. Carroll Smith-Rosenberg argues that the large-scale women's participation in Progressive reform grew out of their Civil War and Reconstruction activism, raising money through Sanitary Fairs and community cookbooks such as Maria Moss' and Mabel Tyree's, caring for the wounded soldiers, and supplying food to needy families (173). During the Progressive era, many women recognized the public potential of their domestic skills and worked to use them on a much larger social stage. The Progressive era therefore heralded "reform" as a widespread social movement, rather than the isolated task of "true" women.

This variation of Victorianism also suggests that women Progressives tended to promote similar values and judge their subjects of reform on this set of class- and race-based standards. Glenna Matthews notes that the "very closeness between Progressives and home economists that gave the new discipline its social dimension … also meant that home economists would share in some of the less desirable characteristics of Progressives, such as their Anglo-Saxonism" (163).

The reform fervor that characterized Progressivism also carried with it an emphasis on white racial superiority and race betterment as a result of other large-scale scientific and cultural developments, such as eugenics and Social Darwinism. For this reason, the white, native-born poor in general received far better treatment than recent immigrants or African Americans.[92] Most charities supported by elite white women favored white English-speaking poor, while societies led by foreign-born women tended to members of their own identity groups. The same structure applied to African-American reform societies and charities, as well as to larger issues surrounding voting rights. Many white Americans feared that all foreign-born or non-white citizens were uneducated and easily manipulated; for this reason, they lobbied against extending them the right to vote. Many white males feared women's suffrage in general as women's concerns for child labor and wage regulation might hurt their businesses' profits.

Progressive motivations varied in the American South, specifically regarding voting and citizenship rights. Much southern rhetoric argued that including an educational qualification to voting rights would uphold the gender and racial hierarchies that had supported the patriarchal control of the planter elite since the early days of the republic. Even proponents of the New South feared for its success if African Americans and women were permitted to vote, believing that newly established manufacturing and trade efforts would suffer and with them, the future of the region as a whole. With these exceptions, however, southern states were often romanticized as a social ideal, the saviors of "lost" northern cities. A common image in reconciliation rhetoric,

[92] Carroll Smith-Rosenberg argues that white bourgeois women insisted that all workers had the rights to safe and hygienic labor conditions and to education, but as many immigrant women began to work from home to support the efforts of their husbands and sons in the 1880s-1890s, women Progressives failed to change their tactics and thus "communication between women across class began to collapse" (174).

the southern belle's formative pastoral existence still resonated with both regions. [93] The society the southern woman represents, with its clear social hierarchy, its benevolent upper class, and its grateful and concessionary former slaves, was for northern readers often the social structure they yearned for. It served as an illustration of peaceful idyll of successful reform based on the superiority of the white middle and upper classes. Writes Nina Silber, "Middle-class northerners learned to love the old plantation aristocracy, especially in their economic deprivation and eventual redemption through northern assistance" (*Romance* 108). The South served as a model of successful reform for northern women, and its retention of its old racial code, she continues, "formed a crucial part of the healing metaphor of the reunion process." Public reform activities, in their views, should ultimately not upset the prevailing opinions of race and class in American society, though they do require extended legal rights for educated white women.

Women addressed reform issues in a variety of ways. The most common were women's clubs and aid societies, often designed around a particular social issue. For example, the Women's Christian Temperance Union, founded in 1874, applied the teachings of Protestant evangelical religion to the consumption of alcohol to secure the morality of the family and the home (Kleinberg 178). While this type of reform had been present in American society since the antebellum period, now its focus shifted more overtly to the Irish and German Catholic immigrants, as well as the southern and eastern European immigrants, as a means of defining American tastes (for beverages and behaviors) as white, native-born, and middle-class. African American and immigrant members of the WCTU did exist, though in separate branches. Frances Harper, who served as superintendent of the Colored Section of the Philadelphia and Pennsylvania branch in the 1870s and 1880s, believed that Christian coalition could erase racism

[93] See John Grammer's discussion of plantation fiction for an exploration of the pastoral mode in southern literature (59).

in favor of national good (180). In the South, however, African-American branches of the WCTU were often organized under white leadership, therefore removing their ability to determine their own reform activities or develop a collective identity. Kleinberg writes that the 1918 Constitutional amendment that passed Prohibition ultimately "had less to do with social [moral] purity … and more to do with social control over potentially disruptive elements during a period of great upheaval" (180). As we shall see, this is the intended function for much domestic rhetoric during the Progressive era. For example, in "Manifest Domesticity," Amy Kaplan argues that antebellum American women used the rhetoric of the home to participate in a broad project of U.S. imperialism and to define the borders of the domestic as national, rather than private and individual. By the late nineteenth-century, however, the wave of immigration beginning in the 1880s led to a perception among the white middle class that the foreign was now on American soil.[94] As such, white, middle-class domestic experts revised their project of "domestic imperialism" to include civilizing the newly-arrived immigrants while simultaneously shoring up the boundaries of their own race-and class-based identities.[95]

Though many of their methods challenged Victorian ideals of private domesticity,[96] domestic scientists and reformers recognized the strong cultural influence of the rhetoric of

[94] Hasia Diner writes that most Italian immigrants arrived between 1880-1920. Irish immigration began earlier due to the potato famine in the 1840s, and East European Jews bagean to arrive in large numbers in the 1870s. Of these groups, approximately half of the Italian immigrants returned home, while Irish and Jewish immigrants planned to remain in America (1-3).

[95] Debra Bernardi uses the term "domestic imperialism" to refer to the "simultaneously frightening yet empowering invasionary images" that form the depiction of the black family home in African-American print culture at the turn of the century (205). I use this term to indicate also the white middle-class women who used domesticity as s means of protecting their personal and national homes against the threat of foreign influence.

[96] Progressivism retained much Victorian rhetoric, such as the emphasis on the purity of the home centered around a moral mother. The challenge came primarily in the topics women publicly addressed: prostitution, temperance, poverty, immigration, and--most significantly--suffrage. Public acknowledgement of these issues was seen in the mid-nineteenth century as evidence of corruption,

motherhood. Kleinberg writes that many reformers such as Jane Addams, who did not marry or have children, still invoked women's traditional domestic duties to care for her home and children to convey the need for women to have a larger role in public matters, specifically suffrage (196). Jane Addams used the term "municipal housekeeping" to refer to her campaign to have the area around Hull House cleaned (Gere and Robbins 643). She reframes acts of cleaning public spaces--therefore "moralizing" in domestic rhetoric—in terms of private domestic duties. In fact, whereas mid-century women's rights advocates were somewhat evenly split between arguments for suffrage based on women's "sameness" to men and arguments based on an inherent "difference," women Progressives tended to emphasize difference. They argued that women were uniquely suited to reform domestic issues, and that their duties to reform the domestic space extended beyond the physical boundaries of their own homes to include the homeless, the working poor, and the uneducated, exploited immigrants. As such, women Progressives promoted a gospel of social motherhood, in which "women provided for society as a whole services they had previously tendered individually to their families" (Kleinberg 177). Motherhood was no longer only the realm of the mother; these women worked to "[transform] public discourse by making domesticity and motherhood public concerns" (185). As we will see in this chapter, the domestic scientists, though often considered to be far from progressive, were in fact engaged in making domesticity a public issue through cooking schools and print discourse.

"Democracy in Taste": Labor and the Domestic Science Movement

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immorality; in short, such public action would have been considered unwomanly. Progressives argued instead that women's duties required them to take public action.

Glenna Richards writes, "Faith in the capacities of the expert was one characteristic of the Progressive generation; another was a reforming zeal dedicated to overhauling a broad range of institution and practices" (151-52). The domestic science movement was characterized by both. Authority, according to domestic scientists, belongs to "the scientifically trained expert" (156). Led by Ellen Richards, the first female graduate of MIT and a lifelong sanitation and dietary activist, as well as an MIT professor, the domestic science movement addressed the working and living conditions of male and female wage laborers, immigration reform, economic progress, race relations, education, healthcare, and of course, women's daily domestic activities. Domestic science emerged in the 1870s to address the issues of hunger and poverty plaguing the working class during the latter years of the Gilded Age. While its early leaders, Isabel Bevier and Marion Talbot, along with Richards, wished to expand the university opportunities for women in fields of science, they quickly found that male administrators believed that the only science women needed was that of food science.[97] Though these women began their careers by distancing themselves from domestic education, they soon found that this was the most viable and most effective means to reform urban living conditions.

Domestic scientists were the first to suggest that the recent scientific advances in defining food's nutritional components (carbohydrates, lipids, etc.) could be applied to the daily lives of Americans and used to cure specific social problems. More importantly for Progressive motives, they could reform the diets of the working poor without disturbing the class order by suggesting diets based on income and job responsibilities. As American society as a whole became characterized by a Progressive reform mentality, domestic scientists also shifted their focus to empowering and invigorating the white middle class. Changes in the industrial labor force

[97] Matthews, 146-48.

combined with several severe economic depressions led to fears concerning the stability of the middle class as a defined, powerful, and unified group. Domestic science sought to reinforce these boundaries dietary and domestic reforms, relying again on the social assumption of middle-class morality and virtue in self-restraint that had characterized the group since the Victorian era. Once again, domestic experts developed discourses of taste to imply the natural superiority of the middle class and its role in preserving what they viewed as a crumbling society due to its ineffective labor practices. Theirs were the tastes of efficiency, productivity, and quality of life, thus improving the health and future of the American "race."[98]

Ellen Richards and other early leaders of the domestic science movement were highly influenced by Social Darwinism and eugenics. They varied both, however, by suggesting that health and its accompanying moral qualities could trump heredity and environmental determinism, though all could lead to the betterment of the white race. Richards even suggested that "home economics," the designated term for her widespread educational curriculum at the 1899 Lake Placid conference, be changed to "euthenics," a term she coined to suggest their core mission to improve the race of Americans by strengthening the middle class and shoring up its boundaries. In *Euthenics, the Science of Controllable Environment* (1910), Richards defines her term as "the betterment of living conditions, through conscious endeavor, for the purpose of securing efficient human beings" (vii). She then sets up a direct comparison of her term and eugenics, demonstrating her curriculum's relationship to racial betterment:

> Eugenics deals with race improvement through heredity.
>
> Euthenics deals with race improvement through environment.

[98] Domestic scientists also promoted dietary standardization in historically black colleges such as Hampton and Tuskegee (Witt, *Black* 109).

> Eugenics is hygiene for the future generations.
>
> Euthenics is hygiene for the present generation.
>
> Eugenics must await careful investigation.
>
> Euthenics has immediate opportunity.
>
> Euthenics precedes eugenics, developing better men now, and thus inevitably creating a better race of men in the future. (viii)

While domestic scientists had chosen "home economics" to present their goals in a broader educational and professional context, "euthenics," according to Richards, gave their educational goals broader social significance. This term, as we know today, did not come to designate the infamous grade school and high school classes, but its explicit awareness of race and class in domestic education continued to underscore cookery writing throughout the Progressive Era.

While Richards' training was in chemistry and her early work focused on sanitation and hygiene, she was also concerned with diet in the preservation of health in the individual and the community. Domestic scientists opened public kitchens in the 1890s, such as the New England Kitchen, to influence the diets of immigrant wage workers by performing daily cooking tasks in an open kitchen and allowing workers to take the results home in their lunch pails. These women believed that after viewing what they considered to be an obviously more efficient, hygienic, and modern cooking process--in short, a "better" process--and then subsequently tasting its results, that immigrant's varied diets would be transformed to a middle-class American standard and would therefore elevate their quality of life. Food and resource abundance led Americans to "believe in their right to a standard of living wherein hunger played no role. They believed that as Americans they *all* deserved to live life free from want" (Diner 16, emphasis in original). This belief inspired much of the reform activity of the Progressive movement. Though dietary

reformers, specifically the domestic scientists, believed no American should be hungry, they also did not believe all Americans should consume the same foods. Using science to bolster their claims, they argued that consumption should be based on one's sex, age, nationality, job, etc. This allowed them to assign working class laborers a diet high in cheap carbohydrates, thus maintaining for the middle and upper classes a more varied diet. They specifically worked to reform immigrant diets, often by "cleansing" their traditional foodways of what they perceived to be unhealthy or inefficient components.

Most immigrants, however, resisted such as drastic changes to their traditional and communal diets. All knew hunger and believed America would allow them to work, thus to eat. Yet "amidst all these universals," Diner writes, "consumption of food has always been culturally constructed. What was tasty to one group invoked disgust and loathing in another" (3). Groups defined varying foods as edible and inedible, and dietary restrictions defined group behaviors and consumption practices. Their rejection of dietary reform conveyed to domestic scientists, however, that they chose to be unhygienic and therefore immoral. Moreover, their refusal to adapt their diets indicated that these workers were lazy and unwilling to participate fully in a successful American economy. Writes Richards in *Euthenics*, "Probably not more than twenty-five per cent in any community are doing a full day's work such as they would be capable of doing if they were in perfect health" (4). In the eyes of domestic reformers, by refusing the health education offered by the public kitchens, immigrant wage workers were refusing to work efficiently and were adding to "the cost of production in all directions, the increased taxation, and [to decreased] interest in daily life" (4).

The cure to this unrest, Richards suggests, is an education in the subordination of taste to the state's needs for distinct class boundaries. She first argues that taste is cultivated rather than

inherent, writing in *The Cost of Food* (1901), "appetite can be educated, directed, like any other habit, but it is still a common superstition that likings for food are inborn traits" (6). This misconception is a result, she argues, of America's emphasis on the natural laws governing the individual's freedoms: "The bearing of this attitude upon habits of life and cost of living is very evident. Every effort to inculcate saner ideas is met with scoffing, with unproven assertions, and with a demand for freedom and unrestrained choice as a mark of American liberty" (6). Cultivated tastes for art, she argues, suggest that Americans recognize that tastes can be cultivated, but that they fail to recognize taste for food as a similar rational, educated preference (98). As a result, she notes, working-class Americans are tempted by what they perceive to like, which is often in fact foods on the middle to upper classes. As such, it is important to separate the foods appropriate to each class of worker, if not the eating spaces themselves. In large hospitals, for example, she suggests that each grade of worker--department heads, nurses, engineers, and janitors--"can have a separate eating-room with different hours and bill of fare" (80). This will not only help them develop a taste for foods appropriate to their stations, but it will save the hospital money. In smaller establishments that cannot spare separate rooms and menus, she notes, the cost of feeding employees will be higher.

Richards argued that cultivating class-based tastes serves both the financial state of the business and the effectiveness of its workers. Productive workers are happy workers, and happy workers do not attempt to unionize or strike, do not request social equality, and do not therefore threaten the status of middle to upper class whites. When Henrietta Goodrich suggested at the fourth Lake Placid Conference that there should be a "democracy in taste," she was not referring to a taste-based equality. Rather, she argues that every person's individual preferences should be considered in terms of their social function (qtd. in Biltekoff). Writes Richards, "In the interest of

the race, of its mental as well as physical development, there is no subject which should occupy the attention of educators comparable with that of food and its influence of human progress" (*Cost* 10).

Because educating working class tastes met with such resistance, domestic scientists turned their attention to reinforcing the status of the middle class through domestic education. In *Perfection Salad: Women and Cooking at the Turn of the Century* (1986), Laura Shapiro argues that while Victorian domestic rhetoric emphasized the corruption of the business world and the need to make the home an escape from its immoral influences, the domestic scientists took the opposite approach: they proposed that American women make the home run more like a business, with the woman in a management position. This is of course a bourgeois perspective; whereas prior reforms catering to the working class emphasized eating for effective labor, middle-class reforms emphasized domestic labor for the purpose of social management. In other words, properly executing one's domestic duties in the middle-class home could produce a standard of American tastes. Unlike the moral tastes suggested by earlier Victorian experts, however, this standard was not one all classes and races should adhere to, but rather the standard by which class boundaries would be judged. One's diet and consumption practices should be catered to one's class and the physical demands of labor; in turn, these practices also served as an outward indication of one's social status. In order to standardize middle-class tastes, many women reformers made a business of domestic education by opening cooking schools throughout the country.[99]

[99] Cooking schools were not an invention of the domestic scientists, though they did to a great extent standardize the schools' curriculums and reform goals. Eliza Leslie attended the first American cooking school, Mrs. Goodfellow's Cooking School in Philadelphia, in the 1820s.

"An Ever Present Teacher": Cooking Schools and the Intellectual Labor of Taste

Though domestic scientists set out to reform labor practices by reforming the diets of the workers, they found that many immigrant groups defined themselves by a preferred a set of physical tastes and thus dubbed them irrational and unworthy of aid. They then shifted their attention to the American middle class and their message from improving the lives of the immigrant working class to improving the lives of white native-born Americans, whom they also felt were in desperate need of domestic education. The cooking school movement began in England in the early 1870s, and quickly spread to America, aided by the trends in vocational training begun with the 1862 Morrill Act (Williams 65). They standardized payment and often instructed students to become cooking teachers themselves, thus professionalizing the field of cookery as a pursuit that extended beyond the home. Most importantly for this study, they removed the assumption of taste as natural and exposed it as a function of education and culture. Whereas previous domestic experts had utilized both meanings, the domestic scientists based their reform on their ability to standardize middle-class behaviors by standardizing their skills and palates. Cooking schools and their publications thus represent taste a form of intellectual labor.

This shift is important because it demonstrates another tenet of the scientific approach to domestic reform: that diet reinforces, rather than transcends, class boundaries. Middle-class women needed domestic reform, according to domestic scientists, because earlier models of domestic activity did not indicate the intellectual labor expected of a middle class, a labor that differentiates it from the working class. Science was key to clearly defining class boundaries when urban environments often placed members of various classes together in public spaces. Richards notes Americans' skepticism, remarking in *The Cost of Food* (1901), "few really

believe that plain living goes with high thinking" (3). Instead, she observes that most Americans attribute their strength and vitality as a race to their variety and abundance of available food, rather than the rational consumption of only those foods (and the rational purchase of only those items) that suit their status, rather than their tastes.

Understanding taste as a form of intellectual labor, she argues, will sustain one's race and class position. Taste can only reinforce or endanger one's class status, she argues; it cannot elevate it. She accuses Americans of "mental laziness" due to their resistance to scientific progress in favor of outdated assumptions of taste as a natural function of the individual (*Cost* 11). While many view their ability to consume rich foods and purchase leisure items as a mark of elevated status, Richards argues that this assumption is not only incorrect but dangerous. "It is not over-education but over-nutrition which threatens race extinction," she writes (4). She conflates young girls' tastes for food and leisure by suggesting that those who should be employed in "interesting occupations" instead nibble sweets while they read novels, indicating a "perverted taste in food and literature" (4). They use tastes to represent a higher status rather than bettering their situation in their own, leading to an unproductive and restless labor force, an uneducated middle class, and thus the social problems domestic scientists set out to address.

One of the Boston Cooking School's famous instructors, Mary Lincoln's *Boston Cook Book: What To Do and Not To Do in Cooking* (1884), opens, "COOKERY is the art of preparing food for the nourishment of the human body. … All civilized nations cook their food, to improve its taste and digestibility. The degree of civilization is often measured by the cuisine" (1). Lincoln's primary audience is the American women who believe that housework is drudgery, are not properly educated, and are therefore by her account destabilizing the middle-class' economic influence. Her contempt for these women is clear: "That a person of ordinary intelligence

presiding over her household can be satisfied with only a vague conception of the common domestic methods, or that any true woman can see anything degrading in any labor necessary for the highest physical condition of her family, would be incredible if the truth of it were not daily manifest" (v). She goes on to describe the variety of recipes she includes, addressing the varying needs to cooking school pupils that perplexed many cooking school founders:

> On types of recipes included, based on cooking school classes and pupils: They must be clear, but concise, for those who are already well grounded in first principles. They must be explained, illustrated, and reiterated for the inexperienced and the careless. They must have a word of caution for those who seem always to have the knack of doing the wrong thing. They must include the most healthful foods for those who have been made ill by improper food; the cheapest as well as the most nutritious, for the laboring class; the richest and most elaborately prepared, for those who can afford them physically as well as pecuniarily. (v)

Like Victorian writers, her accusations are not directed at the foods themselves, but at those who prepare and serve them. Unlike Victorian writers, however, she clearly indicates that classes should be served foods based on income and social status, rather than proposing a standard diet on which to base moral judgments for all Americans. Cooking school educators worked to promote domestic science views: that taste as a scientific and civilizing principle should be a function of class, and should be used to distinguish and reinforce those boundaries. Their performance of middle-class cookery in classes and demonstrations showed women that physical labor can indicate intellectual tastes.

Many domestic scientists felt that American society was ruled by their appetites and tastes, neither of which were appropriate to their condition or economic status. Sarah Rorer, founder of the Philadelphia Cooking School, writes in her *Mrs. Rorer's New Cook Book* (1902), "They are still in the palate stage of existence" (4). They lived to eat, while domestic scientists argued that they should "Strive to reach a higher plane of thought--eat to live" (4). Rorer echoes leader Ellen Richards in her statement of domestic science goals: to promote "simple living and high thinking" (4). New York Cooking School founder Juliet Corson likewise argues that the purpose of a cooking school education is to teach women that domestic activities are intellectual. She writes,

> Good cooking should not be regarded as an incentive to gluttony, or used as the means of tempting the luxurious to undue indulgence of appetite; it has a nobler purpose, the accomplishment of which demands foresight, care and patience. Its mission is to show how every scrap of untainted food, cheap or costly, can be made to yield all its nutrient properties; to decide how every available particle can best be converted into warmth and strength. (*Cooking School* v)

While food retains its bodily connection, cooking schools suggest, it is the intellectual consideration of its nutritive properties that defines middle-class tastes, rather than submission to one's appetites or desires, their explanation for working class immigrants' adherence to traditional food cultures.

Domestic scientists and cooking school educators promoted their discipline in private lessons as well as public schools in order to standardize and publicize their field, and to expand the minds and intellectual possibilities for young women. Rorer describes the role of domestic education in public school curriculums, "where it has been most valuable as a means of mental

and moral training as well as useful for the individual in home keeping or obtaining a livelihood, all of which tend to and aid in the development of industries" (4-5). Both Rorer and Corson emphasize the productive labor that can result from properly executed domestic behaviors. For working class Americans, this meant more consistent wages. For middle-class Americans, however, it meant steady profit and the cultural influence of a successful capitalist enterprise. A common argument in domestic science publications is that "*A perfect diet* consists of common food materials blended to suit the age, sex, occupation and climate in which the individual lives" (Rorer 12, emphasis in original). Corson's and Rorer's goals are clear: Regulate tastes based on a series of factors, the most important being labor, which is, in their views, almost always standardized by class.

Though common rhetoric at the end of the nineteenth century viewed housework as drudgery, the job of the domestic scientist was to change the views of their middle-class audience, to make housework the key to national salvation and self-preservation. Shapiro notes that women's magazines and housekeeping texts constantly reaffirmed the image of the home as "a refuge for men but a lifelong challenge for women" (33). She writes, "Hurry, confusion, disorganization--a domestic chaos always hovered just out of sight … It was women's job to stave off this chaos, to rescue her family in a thousand little ways from the dirt and disorder that signaled disaster" (33). As more families lived in cities where problems of disease and economic downturn were at least more visible, if not more common, citizens longed for some sense of control over the imminent chaos. Meanwhile, domestic scientists viewed these women as their primary obstacle to social reform: Matthews notes that their "desire to improve social conditions often coexisted with contempt for ordinary people--workers, housewives, immigrants," and thus elitism, along with Anglo-Saxonism, was an implicit attitude of much Progressive domestic

rhetoric. Domestic scientists did not trust American women, and American women often did not trust new technology and science, and refused to see the home as a laboratory. Cooking schools and domestic scientists also recognized the increasingly economic role of the middle-class housewife. Ellen Richards writes, "As an economic factor, the influence of the housewife is of the greatest moment. …a city and suburban dweller is a buyer, not a producer" (*Euthenics* 146). No longer esteemed only as the moral caretaker of the home, or even as its principal consumer, she was now its economic strategist. These tasks, of course, continued to have spiritual and moral implications throughout the reform movement. It was the job of women's literature--a familiar and traditional genre--to convince them that intellectual and economic labor was not only preferable, but rather necessary to performing one's womanly duties.

"Paper Housekeeping": Novelized Cookbooks, or Adding Art to Taste

Novelized cookbooks, popularized by domestic expert Catherine Owen, combine multiple genres and their associated reading practices, cultural origins, and social functions under one cover. Many were serialized in women's magazines such as *Good Housekeeping* and *Ladies' Home Journal*, much like their sentimental predecessors, and later published in complete or expanded editions. As Kim Cohen suggests in "'True and Faithful in Everything': Recipes For Servants and Class Reform in Catherine Owen's Cookbook Novels," these novels are the pinnacle of economic efficiency: a single text offers a reader everything from education to leisure in one current and culturally-relevant package. Unlike antebellum domestic novels, they do not emphasize the impact of domestic activity on spiritual salvation, and while they promote middle-class values, they devote far more narrative space to finances, budgets, and marketing, an act which Sarah Hale and her followers would have deemed grossly inappropriate for a "true

woman." In fact, Cohen argues, these novels "articulate the monetary value of feminine labor" in their inclusion of Molly's budgets and their discussions of servant wages (110). These novels are fictionalized representations of the domestic science movement, both its ideals and challenges, and in particular the cooking school experience. They go beyond domestic science pursuits, however, to further explore the role of taste as a function of intellectual cookery and aesthetic cultivation. Catherine Owen's novelized cookbooks give women access to cultural discourses of taste in a realm slightly outside that of the cookbook. As such, her works articulate the integration of physical and aesthetic or intellectual tastes.

Catherine Owen, the pen name of Helen Alice Nitzch, was a well-known cookbook author and domestic expert prior to her publication of three novelized cookbooks: *Ten Dollars Enough* (1886), *Molly Bishop's Family* (1887), and *Gentle Breadwinners* (1888). These novels chronicle the lives of middle-class women and their communities, and their experiments in managing domestic affairs on a small budget. *Ten Dollars Enough* explores the life of middle-class Molly Bishop as she helps her husband save money to buy a home, and start a family. Subtitled "Keeping house well on ten dollars a week; How it has been done; how it may be done again," readers understand that they are to learn from Molly's experience. Through the careful integration of recipes befitting particular events in Molly Bishop's life (and, by extension, the lives of countless readers like her) Owen teaches women the necessity of careful household management and the ability to support oneself should the need arise. In so doing, she revises and fortifies white middle-class identity against perceived foreign and domestic threats.

Owen's body of work reflects the need to help middle-class Americans consider taste and cookery outside the realm of the kitchen; in other words, to remove taste from its physical associations and place it in the context of art and cultivation. She opens her 1881 *Culture and*

Cooking; or Art in the Kitchen by writing "This is not a cookery book" (iii). She writes that her volume is instead a textual liaison between the cook and her cookbook, "an effort to fill the gap between you and your household oracle, whether she be one of those exasperating old friends who maddened our mother with their vagueness, or the newer and better lights of our own generation" (iii). Her goal is not to teach women to cook by following recipes, of which she includes only a few, but to demonstrate that cookery has much in common with other aspects of women's culture and that it is, in fact, an art: "cooking and cultivation," she writes, "are by no means antagonistic (v). She notes that literary women do not find cooking beneath them; why then, she asks, should others? "Who does not remember with affectionate admiration Charlotte Bronte taking the eyes of the potatoes stealthily, … or Margaret Fuller shelling peas?" (v). By elevating cooking to an art, worthy of a print treatise rather than a straightforward manual, she hopes to remove the stigma from domestic duties and promote them as a means of intellectual progress. As such, she includes an epigraph from Brillat-Savarin's 1825 *Physiology of Taste* in its original French. Translated, it reads: "The Creator, when he obliges man to eat, invites him to do so by appetite, and rewards him by pleasure."[100] Her use of taste is obviously distinct from that of the Progressive domestic reformers, though their goals are consistent: educate the tastes of the American population to create a more ordered, content, and progressive society, and broaden the perception of women's duties to demonstrate their continuity with men's pursuits, both industrial and discursive.

In the early nineteenth century, European gastronomers worked to elevate "gourmandism to the status of the fine arts" and to "establish its legitimate link to aesthetic taste" (Gigante 166). French cuisine, often maligned in American discourse for its overt emphasis on pleasure and

[100] Aphorism of the Professor, V.: "Le Createur, en obligeant l'homme a manger pour vivre, l'y invite par l'appetit et l'en recompense par le plaisir" (1). Translated by M.F.K. Fisher.

luxury, and thus its opposition to austere Puritan tradition, became useful in late nineteenth-century America to distinguish between taste as a "stubborn" working class preference for particular food items and taste as a cultivated intellectual pursuit. In keeping with American habits of moderation, however, food writers who engaged French cuisine, such as Mary Lincoln and Catherine Owen, noted that not all French cuisine was elaborate. Cuisine of the French middle class was frugal, economical, yet its practitioners derived pleasure from it. In *Culture and Cooking*, Owen joins a French and English tradition of "writing about culture under the guise of food" (Gigante 167). Her novelized cookbooks likewise emphasize their middle-class heroine's French upbringing and thus her connection with "cultivated" modes of cooking and eating. By dramatizing recipes in sentimental literature, Owen can show readers the culture surrounding proper demonstrations of taste. Fiction places food in various spaces and contexts; Owen's text combines American domestic science principles and European aesthetics: "To leave the cookbook and enter the world of gastronomical writing was to leave the kitchen and enter the dining room, a new public exhibition space for taste" (Gigante 168).

Culture and Cooking goes on to give a cultural history of taste and cookery, demonstrating that in many ancient civilizations cooks were noble, respected citizens, esteemed for their knowledge rather than diminished for the vulgarity. Upper-class women in France, for example, study cookery as an art, an example Owen uses to critique the pretense of American "ladies." She writes, "I believe there exists a feeling, not often expressed perhaps, but prevalent among young people, that for a lady to cook with her own hands is vulgar; to love to do it shows that she is of low intellectual caliber, a sort of drawing-room Bridget" (*Culture* 5).[101] Even those women who are able to employ servants do not eat well because they do not have the domestic

[101] "Bridget" is a nineteenth-century slur for a female Irish domestic servant, characterized by a lack of education and hygiene.

knowledge to train them properly. While Owen claims that women who can afford servants should employ them, she notes that few American cooks--of any class--are properly educated. Much like her later novels, Owen narrates several basic recipes for breads, luncheons, and sweets, integrating discussions of famous texts and techniques throughout, thus providing a broad sense of the cultural impact of cooking even the simplest of dishes. *Ten Dollars Enough*, serialized only four years later, replaces philosophers and authors with fictional characters, yet these characters represent many of the same culinary perspectives as those developed in her earlier work.

Catherine Owen's novelized cookbook appropriately begins by introducing readers to a character learning to keep house by a careful study of domestic print culture. Tired of boarding, Molly Bishop longs for a home of her own, and prepares herself with a combination of cooking school education and what her husband, Harry, refers to as "paper housekeeping": cookbooks, magazines, newspaper clippings--any print document that describes domestic skills (4). Readers are aware from the beginning that Molly's education is not only thorough; it is also current. Cooking schools taught women basic techniques; print culture taught women to apply those techniques in the most current and scientific manner.

In order to bolster the reputation of American cuisine and its ability to elevate the American home, Owen creates a marriage between Molly and Harry that is emblematic of the power struggle taking place in American industrial culture during the Progressive era. Molly is a middle-class woman with no dowry or living family. Prior to marriage she took care of her invalid mother in a small village in France, and when her mother died, "her [] income died with her" (5). Molly's lack of dowry or family fortune places her firmly within the realm of the American middle class; her culture and skills allow her to live that existence with ease. Harry, on

the other hand, comes from a wealthy family and, as Owen reminds readers throughout the opening chapters, was raised on and enjoyed lavish meals. She also describes him as a critical eater: His mother remarks when he announces his engagement to Molly that he will never be able to endure the foods she will cook, as he still complained of the expensive foods provided at home, saying "You criticize even my cook; how will you do with no cook at all?" (3). He replies pointedly, "I shouldn't criticize, dear mother, if you did the cooking." So while we know that he appreciates good food, he also recognizes the role of the cook in the preparation of that food, and the influence of that role on the family. Because Harry is initially described as such a critical character, his effusive compliments have even more rhetorical power throughout the text. His preference of Molly's food over the lavish cuisine of his youth supports the cooking school movement and its abilities to manipulate the social markers of class. Finally, when viewed in a larger representative context, we see the triumph of middle-class values and work ethic over the opulence of the inherently wealthy, a goal of the Progressives throughout the next decades.

While many cookbooks throughout the century were written to be read, not simply consulted, *Ten Dollars Enough* is the first that begs to be read from cover to cover. In fact, its original publication form, the serial novel, actually required this of readers: published in monthly installments, it was necessary to read the chapters in the order they were published, to wait for questions to be answered by the author in the next issue, and to build one's knowledge of budgeting and cookery gradually. Viewed in its original serial form, its narrative structure models cooking school culture: students must learn one lesson at a time, they were part of a learning community, and, to some extent, they were entertained. Its narrative presentation and integrated, instructional, realistic dialogue, suggests a classroom with its heroine, Molly Bishop, at the helm. Like many cooking school teachers, Molly had first been a student herself, and she

tells her husband early in the novel, "I assure you I haven't been to cooking-schools for nothing" (2). She puts her knowledge to use in her own cooking, training her servant Marta, and education her neighbors, many of whom believe they have no time for proper cookery or education.

Cooking schools offered a variety of recipes whose origin often depended on the teacher. When Molly Bishop tells her husband of her first lunch in their new home, "It is part cooking-school, and a tiny bit Molly," she means that her experience taking care of her invalid mother in France, as well as her own creativity and taste, informs details of her cooking (Owen 16). Molly's variations on cooking school recipes are designed for superior flavor, a subtle critique of the efforts of the domestic scientists toward complete standardization at the expense of physical taste. Her variations are made slightly more acceptable when she lets her audience know that her creations are for the pleasure of her husband as she, ever the proper middle-class woman, does not care for cold meat and eats very little at this first luncheon (16). While they are highly influenced by progressivism and domestic science, novelized cookbooks are permitted by the framework of their genre to add taste back to the act of cooking, as well as the act of eating. Yet taking pleasure in the flavor of one's meal is a privilege allowed only to the male characters, who must be satisfied and nourished by proper meals; Molly's pleasure must reside in her intellectual management and her ability to create her husband's satisfaction. Likewise, women readers can enjoy their literary taste and domestic education; physical taste is removed from both the pages of the text and the experience of the woman cooking it. By elevating recipes using scientific and literary rhetoric, culinary activists were working to give recipes the same intellectual status attributed to male print culture. For this reason, in *Ten Dollars Enough* Harry raves about the taste of Molly's food, but playfully chides her when she remarks that she has "longed to taste nice cabbage for months," calling her a "vulgar little person" (20). Pleasure in eating made food

preparation a bodily act with worldly goals, rather than an intellectual act of domestic reform. Owen slowly indicates that Molly does in fact have a solid appetite and desire for food, but the first installation of the serial must cater to women's expectations of the traditional woman. Molly's critiques--similar to those in *Culture and Cooking*--can come later, through Owen's further exploration of the possibilities of her dual role as teacher and student.

Molly is required throughout the text to teach her newly-hired German servant, Marta, almost every basic household skill, an illustration of the highly publicized problem with "newly imported" servants who spoke little English and knew nothing of American tastes, cooking techniques, or new domestic technologies. Marta is exactly the type of pupil cooking schools aimed to help, especially schools such as the North Bennett Street branch of the Boston Cooking School, founded to reach the poor women who were unable to attend the school on Tremont Street.[102] Molly models proper techniques for Marta, showing her once, then asking her to perform the tasks herself. In essence, Molly becomes a cooking school instructor for Marta, whose skills improve as the novel progresses. Kim Cohen notes the narrative slippage between Marta and the reader, as Marta asks many questions posed by readers in the novel's initial serial run in *Good Housekeeping* (108, 111). Both Marta and readers, Cohen suggests, are students in Molly's cooking school. For this reason, perhaps, Owen does not require Marta to learn English, and thus assimilate to middle-class American behaviors, though this was a common practice in much domestic education, particularly in public school home economics courses. In one scene, Marta even teaches Molly to make a traditional German dish—fried noodles—which Cohen refers to as "hierarchical slippage" (113), but which also illustrates Molly as sympathetic and

[102] The North Bennett Street branch of the Boston Cooking School opened in the Italian district of Boston in 1880. It flourished, though most committee members argued against its opening, suggesting that its students would be bettered by the environment of the original Tremont Street school (Shapiro 57).

intellectual, rather than blindly following a scientific dogma to the exclusion of all other forms of knowledge.[103]

When Harry worries that Molly is working too hard or spending too much time in the kitchen, we quickly learn the tradeoff for being an excellent home manager in the industrial era: Molly does not sew. Instead, she takes advantage of her role as a consumer, another aspect of a domestic scientist education. She remarks, "I am not fond of plain sewing; and as clothes ready made can now be bought so good and cheap, I don't mean to do more than keep the buttons sewed on" (66). In fact, Owen places a large emphasis on Molly's clothing, noting during her first lunch preparation in their new home that Molly preferred to work in an apron, though her cooking school teacher was so neat when cooking that she required no apron and always "left her class spotless" (15). This suggests that Molly, like her readers, is still in the process of learning. She recognizes the value of appearance, however, and runs upstairs before Harry arrives home to "put on a clean collar" and "arrange[] a stray curl" (15). In order to refute the arguments that cooking is a vulgar or dirty process, Owen emphasizes Molly's apron and aspirations to the cleanliness of the instructor, as well as her efforts to demonstrate to her husband that cooking will not de-feminize her by making her appear to be working class.

Molly's skills as a domestic educator are put to the test when Mr. Lennox, riding on the same train as Harry, remarks that he wishes Molly would teach his wife how to better perform her domestic duties. He tells Harry, "I wish Mrs. Bishop would teach my wife how to put some flavor into what we eat. Our means are narrow, but I do know that if Letty knew how to cook, we would all be better, and she herself" (52). Molly quickly discovers the problem: Mrs. Lennox

[103] Cohen writes that *Good Housekeeping* ran articles on global or immigrant food cultures in the same issues that ran episodes of Owen's novel, thus reinforcing an exchange of knowledge rather than the standard assimilationist narrative (120).

believes she has no time to go to the market and must "trust what the butcher sends" (53). This device allows Owen to train women readers in proper consumer techniques. This chapter is subtitled "Economical Buying Makes Good Living," indicating that cooking ability without marketing skills will still not produce the best results. It also allows Owen to discuss better food without requiring Molly to lecture Mrs. Lennox on flavor, as gender standards dictate that only Mr. Lennox can complain of taste; Mrs. Lennox must be concerned with domestic management. Molly realizes that Mrs. Lennox's attention to sewing her own garments, rather than buying them as Molly does, takes away from time she could spend preparing economical and flavorful meals. Her lack of consumer knowledge and insistence on doing herself that which could be left to others, a point Owen makes in *Culture and Cooking* as well, is portrayed as detrimental to the health of her family.

Catherine Owen revises the labor of middle-class domesticity by emphasizing the benefit of a cooking school education and its ability to empower middle-class women to manage their family's finances and ensure a secure future for themselves regardless of circumstance. She also argues, however, that women's labor becomes drudgery when one does not take advantage of modern techniques or the advantages of a healthy income. Much as Eliza Leslie argued several decades before, one's consumer knowledge is part of, rather than opposed to, one's domestic expertise. Presented in the context of a novel, Owen is able to demonstrate the leisure and art that is the benefit of learned domestic expertise. In this genre, education and leisure can occur simultaneously, thus teaching readers that the benefits of their middle-class status are not at odds with domestic duties. Skillful performance of domesticity, rather, can be presented as an art, allowing them significant cultural influence.

Chapter 5

Revisions of Labor: Race, Nostalgia, and the Ownership of Middle-Class Tastes

"As the homes are so will the nation be, for the nation is nothing more than a collection of what is produced in the homes. The as it is oftener called, domestic science, is thus the very key-stone of the political arch" (Deitrick 6). With these words, Ellen Bartelle Deitrick opens her paper on "Domestic Science," presented to the Boston Woman's Era Club, an African American women's literary society, in March 1894. Developed to expand the opportunities and intellectual possibilities for African-American women in the final decades of the nineteenth century, women's clubs provided a space to discuss literature, politics, and racial progress among women who were doubly oppressed by race and gender. Through papers, discussions, and organized reform activities, these women were able to "represent themselves and expand their identities" beyond their traditional cultural representations as uneducated, unintelligent, and incapable of mental work beyond that demanded by domestic service (McHenry 190). Many African-American clubwomen participated in the arduous struggle to gain representation on the World's Congress of Representative Women, part of the activities of the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition, and the hostility they encountered led to increased participation in various African America women's organizations throughout the nation. As Frances Harper declared to the Women's Congress that they were standing "on the threshold of woman's era," she recognized that the gendered unity she proclaimed was still a distant goal (Sewall 433-34). African

American women intellectuals were in constant discussion regarding how to perform their middle-class womanhood, a quality often associated only with white women's domestic practices.

Ellen Deitrick's discussion of domestic science appeared in the inaugural issue of Woman's Era, highlighting the importance of domestic debates among African American women. She uses the language of professionalism, common in domestic science rhetoric, to argue that women should not toil under overwhelming duties, all of which require vast amounts of knowledge ranging from health and nutrition to plumbing, drainage, heating and lighting (Deitrick 6). Rather, women should divide these forms of labor as men divide tasks in a factory or business. She writes, "Men long ago learned that better work was done by division of labor. This lesson housewives will be forced to learn if they do not want to sink beneath a mountain of toil and trouble and become mere stolid, patient drudges" (7). Create a cooperative laundry service, she writes, to cut down on the time spent completing domestic chores (7). This way, more time can be spent in intellectual activity and charity work, and more money can be saved to live comfortably. The ultimate goal of the domestic scientist, she writes, is to "sometime own her own home" (7). She explains that proper domestic tastes involve material and ideological ownership:

> The first result of a true training in domestic science is the gaining of courage to be one's own self, to live one's own life, to model one's own home in blissful independence of the rule of that social tyrant, Mrs. Grundy, the courage to have one's floors bare and serviceably painted, if one cannot afford a carpet in the first place, or the still greater expense of having a carpet properly and frequently renovated thereafter. … Here the domestic scientist is strong. Honest comfort and

> health she will have first, luxury, if it come at all must wait her perfect convenience. (7)

She writes that it is dependent upon the intellectual domestic woman to cure the cramped and unsanitary conditions of modern city life. Moreover, proper performance of intellectual management allows African-American women to avoid the control or ownership of another: "Life under another man's roof is unstable, whether it be in a West End tenement or in a gaudy apartment on the Back Bay. There is no greater joy in material possession than the joy of the home built as a result of one's own saving and planning" (7). Deitrick's emphasis on intellectual management and material tastes as a path to home—and by extension, self--possession distinguish her discussion of domestic science from those of white domestic scientists for whom ownership is neither tenuous nor as ideologically significant.

African-American women engaged discussions of taste through domestic discourse in order to elevate domesticity to a learned art rather than an instinctual performance, to display their middle-class intellectual activities, and to demonstrate the potential of domestic activity to unite women and gain a greater political influence. Their efforts at domestic mobility, however, were often rejected, particularly by southern white women whose dependence on segregation to maintain their sense of regional identity and racial superiority was threatened by racial progress. As such, southern women created a domestic rhetoric that relied on slavery-era images of African-American women in subservient domestic roles characterized by physical, rather than intellectual, tastes. These domestic discourses—of expressing and containing African-American social mobility—were in constant competition throughout the turn of the century. Turn of the century domestic discourse was, in essence, a battle for the control of taste. Taste had become a marker of middle-class intellectual identity; both groups of authors discussed in this chapter were

marginalized by mainstream domestic science rhetoric, and worked to assert themselves into conversations concerning national standards of taste.

This chapter examines several representative cooking texts by African American and southern white women in order to discuss the competing discourses of taste at work in turn-of-the-century America. Abby Fisher and Emma Hayes represent themselves as upwardly mobile former domestic servants in *What Mrs. Fisher Knows About Old Southern Cooking* (1881) and *The Kentucky Cook Book* (1912). Meanwhile, *The Federation Cook Book* (1910), a community cookbook published by a group of African-American women in California, engages discourses of middle-class womanhood by exploring marriage, learned domestic skills, even African American capitalist enterprises in the pages of their collection. Mammy cookbooks, most often written by southern white women, worked to contain racial progress by deploying racialized domestic stereotypes and plantation dialect. Rather than allowing African-American women ownership of their own cuisine and skills, they redefine the "labor" of southern cuisine as the necessity of the white middle-class to record recipes in print.

African-American Cookbooks and the Rise of a Black Middle Class

While their definitions of taste and domesticity often varied, domestic scientists, cooking school instructors, and novelists explored the potential of taste discourse to unify and strengthen a white middle class during the Progressive era. Taste as a function of science or art was still a discourse accessible only to those with sufficient education, opportunity, and capital. This allowed domestic experts and reformers to exclude from their ranks any who did not fit their narrow definitions of middle-class identity. The Progressive era brought with it the rapid increase in African-American educational facilities, literacy, and social opportunity. It also introduced,

however, an immediate reaction in the form of lynching laws, voter discrimination, and the proliferation of slavery-era stereotypes intended to deny racial progress through print and discursive mediums.

African-American women in particular worked to explore racial and gendered progress in many of the same forms employed by their white counterparts: reform societies, women's clubs, and literacy societies flourished in the years following the Civil War, though they had been a part of African-American society long before (McHenry 23).[104] These societies, usually formed in the urban North, such as New York, Boston, and Philadelphia (also the homes of the nation's largest publishing houses) were an important means for African-American women to advocate literacy and thus participation in public life, political discussions, etc. Meetings, seminars, and lectures, as well as printed newspapers and magazines, allowed African Americans to discuss relevant issues and create a national middle-class identity for themselves. These groups formed a network through which groups of urban blacks could connect, share ideas, and generate a larger group identity.[105] Many of their early leaders, such as Frances Harper, were already active in African-American branches of white-led reform groups, such as the Women's Christian Temperance Union. Others gained positions of influence in emerging black colleges. Hallie Quinn Brown, for example, became a professor at Wilberforce University in Ohio and later Dean of Women at Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. These women, and many others, used both print and public discourse to promote an emerging black middle class, and to align their pursuits with those of the

[104] McHenry notes that freed blacks in the urban North formed literary societies in the 1820s and 1830s to explore literature as a means of expanding the mind, inspired by Enlightenment views on the importance of reason and intellect (23).
[105] For more on this topic, see Elizabeth McHenry's *Forgotten Readers: Recovering the Lost History of African American Literary Societies* (2002).

white middle class while still maintaining their racial distinction, as widespread discrimination led to concerns the white community did not share.

Racial collectivity was often constructed along class lines. Just as whiteness designated a primarily middle-class identity, blackness—at least among its spokespersons—often indicated a similar affiliation.[106] Grace Hale writes that an "expanding sense of a national race-wide black collectivity … arose in conjunction with whites' increasingly racialized thinking and paradoxically at the same moment that class, gender, and even regional gaps between African-Americans grew ever wider" (21). Mainstream racial identities similarly grew to mean middle-class racial identities. An emerging black middle class, composed of northern intellectuals, students and graduates of southern black universities such as Fisk and Howard, and economically and/or politically successful African Americans in both regions, often looked down on the black working class and worked to distance themselves from "the history and folk culture of slavery" (*Making* 22). White Americans likewise created their sense of whiteness not just in opposition to blackness, but also to foreignness (immigrants) and the increasing visibility of the lower class in social spaces. Meanwhile, lower classes in both groups were skeptical of middle-class authorities, and women's needs were often sidelined or used to support men's political, intellectual, and economic pursuits.

[106] Racial identity formation is an expansive topic that extends far beyond the scope of the current discussion. For more on African-American identity formation, see Nell Irvin Painter, *Creating Black Americans: Africa American History and Its Meanings, 1619 to the Present* (2006); Hazel Carby, *Reconstructing Womanhood: The Emergence of the Afro-American Woman Novelist* (1987); Kevin Gaines, *Uplifting the Race: Black Leadership, Politics, and Culture in the Twentieth Century* (1996); Lawrence W. Levine, *Black Culture and Black Consciousness: Afro-American Folk Thought from Slavery to Freedom* (1977). For more on whiteness studies, see Grace Elizabeth Hale, *Making Whiteness: The Culture of Segregation in the South, 1890-1940* (1998); Ruth Frankenberg, *White Women, Race Matters: The Social Construction of Whiteness* (1993); Toni Morrison, *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination* (1992); Allen Theodore, *The Invention of the White Race: Racial Oppression and Social Control* (1994); Nell Irvin Painter, *The History of White People* (2010).

While black women intellectuals struggled to promote their middle-class identities, many more black women were taking jobs as domestic servants, particularly in the South where almost all industrial manufacturers hired white, native-born workers rather than African American men and women (Kleinberg 115). Though these women struggled to distinguish themselves from the duties required them as slaves, the racism in the southern manufacturing industries, particularly textile mills, often led them back into white homes as paid domestic servants. A long legacy of domestic service created a high demand for African American cooks in the South. Writes Sharpless, "White women might be willing to clean their houses or care for their own children, but they eagerly sought workers to take on the tasks of food preparation" (7). A historical lack of domestic training for young white women in part created this demand. Another explanation, though almost too simplistic to mention, concerns the South's emphasis on the literal taste of their cuisine, and its resulting distinction. African-American women, unlike middle-class white women (regardless of regional affiliation) were often associated with food, a practice which "branded them as being closer to nature, wilder, less refined than their white employers" (xv). Reconstruction-era cookbook authors staked their necessity to the national union on the distinction of their food, made possible by their ability to impose physical taste on black women and claim its cultural and intellectual heritage for their own.

African Americans increasingly attempted to use print to counter their representation by white Americans. African-American clubwomen and their associated print discourse attempted to present an affiliation with white women's clubs as well as a distinction based on their discussion of race-related issues (Gere and Robbins 647, 660). African-American women recognized the cultural authority of print, and the resulting domestic print culture also addressed the accusations of many whites, particularly in terms of literacy, education, and intellect. During

slavery, whites often withheld literacy from slaves, going so far as to make it a crime to teach an African-American to read. Literacy thus became imbued with a capitalist sense of possession, which had previously marked the distinction between propertied white males and everyone else (662). Print allowed African-American women to participate more fully in an increasingly capitalist society. Witholding literacy indicated one's possession of another; demonstrating one's literacy in print indicated self-possession and progress. Taste, however, was a constant discussion, as African-American clubwomen worried about what they should read, how they should write, and what type of work designated both intellectual progress and domestic tradition.[107]

In July 1895, Victoria Earle Matthews delivered her famous address, "The Value of Race Literature," to an audience of women's club leaders in Boston. In this address, she argued that literature by African American men and women, whether or not it dealt explicitly with race, could be a means to counter white Americans' "racist mischaracterizations with more accurate and more praiseworthy representations of themselves" (McHenry 191). Race literature, she argued could distinguish African Americans as intellectual contributors to American society by its very existence, as well as by the variety and diversity of topics it discussed. It would finally foster not only African-American acceptance among a broad American population, but great racial pride among African-American citizens.[108] Her charge to read and create a body of writing that would reflect the scope and diversity of the American-American population is reflected in the cooking texts and domestic discourse produced in the following years.

In this context, several cookbook genres emerged. Former domestic servants published cookbooks recording traditional southern cuisine, relying on their distinction as skilled cooks and

[107] For more on this, see McHenry, Chapter 4; see also Gere and Robbins.
[108] For more on this address, see McHenry, pp. 191-203; see also Gere and Robbins.

tastemakers for their credibility and marketability. Middle-class African-American women published community cookbooks, contributing recipes to a collection that defined racial progress and black collective identity and literacy as comparable to that of middle-class white society. Two of the most important African American-authored domestic texts, Abby Fisher's *What Mrs. Fisher Knows About Old Southern Cooking* (1881) and Bertha Turner's edited *Federation Cook Book* (1910), were published in California, thus avoiding the complex power negotiations and conciliatory culture of the north- and southeast, in which black Americans often became both scapegoat and reconciliatory prize.

Written By Herself: African-American Women and the Business of Domesticity

Cookbooks by African-American women complicate the narrative of white women as domestic authorities. As white women worked to make domestic labor a cerebral process, black women still performed much of the actual labor, especially in the South. While white women worked to reinforce the characterization of black women as "Mammies" by using rhetoric that emphasized physicality and instinct, black women in the 1880s and 90s began to write their own cookbooks, performing both the actual and intellectual labor of cooking.[109] Black women worked to rebut the representation of their abilities as instinctual by utilizing domestic science rhetoric of clarity and precision when discussing their techniques and recipes. Even more important, however, is the recognition of the value of printed domestic discourse to establish and promote one's authority to a national audience.

[109] Historian Janice Longone recently discovered an 1866 cooking text by Malinda Russell. Its content was primarily a record of European dishes cooked for a wealthy southern family, rather than those she had developed herself. It was also published several decades before a trend emerged in African-American domestic publishing. For these reasons, I do not include it here, though its existence is certainly significant.

African-American women participated in the intellectual labor of cookery by recording and publishing their own recipes, recipes that were often claimed by their white employers. Karen Hess writes that African-American women, as both slaves and servants, were often coerced into giving away recipes by owners or employers. Print allowed them to claim the recipes, skills, and literacy for themselves. The act of publishing and distributing a cookbook indicates ownership: of domestic knowledge and skills, and of the home space that produces them. For African-American women, this allowed them to "possess" the knowledge and labor that, during slavery, had come to define white southern families and culture. African-American cookbook authors "gave evidence of the invisible labor" that made upper-class white lifestyles possible (Zafar 139-140). African-American cookbook authors were also careful to avoid distinction of their food based on taste alone. Neither Fisher nor Hayes describes the value of their recipes in terms of their distinctive flavors; rather, they use traditional print recipe formats to convey the intellectual work of their recipes: both appear in narrative form, with the list of ingredients incorporated into the instructions. While many domestic workers did "cook by taste" or by feel, this was a result not of instinctual or inherent knowledge but of lack of access to education or literacy. Fisher and Hayes, however, include careful measurements, and suggest only that readers season to taste, a ubiquitous instruction in published cooking texts. To codify recipes, recording clear measurements and careful instructions, was to claim the level of authority of the domestic scientists, or the ability to own one's knowledge.

Abby Fisher is only the fourth known African American to publish a cookbook, *What Mrs. Fisher Knows About Old Southern Cooking* (1881), and only the second woman. She was likely a slave, though she does not discuss this status, explicitly or implicitly, in her text. Rafia Zafar suggests that her authority might be questioned by white readers were she to allude to her

years in service (141). Fisher does not mention her race within her book; what little we know of her history comes primarily from Karen Hess. We know even less of Emma Hayes, author of the 1912 *Kentucky Cook-Book*. Our knowledge comes only from her own brief introduction: "This book is the work of a colored cook of many years' experience, and who has had ample opportunity for experimenting and testing the recipes presented. They are simply and easily made, and have proved to be excellent. The book will be found a most useful addition to any kitchen." It is signed "Sincerely, MRS. W. T. HAYES, Author of the Kentucky Cook Book."

Fisher's and Hayes' texts, both examples of single-authored African-American cookbooks, share specific rhetorical characteristics. Each includes a short preface in which neither author gives personal background, but instead explains the conditions of authorship an the text readers can expect. Each author explains why she chose to publish a cookbook (usually requested by others), and her years of experience, giving her text--and thus herself--authority based on practice. Also, each author assures readers that they will find her text satisfactory and easy to follow. Though Abby Fisher and Emma Hayes avoid the extended introductions of science and nutrition common in cooking school texts, both emphasize precision and reproducibility in their cookbooks, as well as their success as professional cooks. Unlike white women experts, they imply, both women have had to earn their living based on their domestic abilities; they are neither an art nor a fashionable trend.

As this dissertation has demonstrated, these prefatory remarks are not unusual. Many nineteenth-century cookbooks contain similar guarantees. Through first-person conversational rhetoric, they provide female readers with a sense of a bodily authority present in the kitchen. The context of African-American authored texts, however, alters the effect of these techniques. Fisher and Hayes assure women of their recipes' ultimate success due to their years of

experience; this experience, however, is most likely slavery and domestic service, rather than cooking school education or a reputation as a wealthy hostess expected of white-authored texts making the same claims. The authoritative body in the kitchen, then, is a black body. This construct both replicates the familiar paradigm of black domestic servants common in many white households while at the same time altering the power structure through print and its accompanying assumptions of authority, education, and intellect. Print elevates the author from the natural, experiential, and individual knowledge assumed of servants, more specifically mammies, to a conveyor of knowledge that can be replicated and is thus not "natural" but learned. Witt writes that Abby Fisher's *What Mrs. Fisher Knows About Old Southern Cooking* (1881) "is particularly significant because its existence undermines one of the key mythologies that white plantation-school writers and southern cookbook authors propagated about black women cooks--that they cooked 'by instinct' and knew not what they did" ("Fiction" 107). The act of printing and publishing contradicts the assumption of intellectual inferiority. Even Fisher's text, which was transcribed rather than written by Fisher herself, emphasizes that her knowledge is printable, rather than secret or irrational. Witt argues that Fisher and Hayes likely capitalized on the popularity of the mammy in American culture as a means of marketing their own texts and achieving economic success She writes, "[Abby Fisher] might be understood to have distanced herself from the mammy stereotype in stressing the transcribability of what she 'knows' while, paradoxically, recuperating aspects of the mammy's emerging culinary aura to further her own celebrity" (107). By appropriating genre characteristics of traditionally white-authored texts, black cooks elevate themselves rhetorically to the level of white cooking authorities, demonstrating the possibilities of racial uplift and critiquing readers' assumptions of race-based abilities through a familiar and popular genre.

Fisher was writing at a time when Americans were both fascinated by and threatened by southern culture. Fisher thus does not emphasize her racial heritage. Even her recipes do not suggest a particular racial heritage. Zafar notes that Fisher's inclusion of recipes such as "Plantation Corn Bread or Hoe Cake" does not immediately indicate her status as former slave, or even as a black writer. Zafar notes that cookbook authors regularly borrowed from one another, though Fisher's illiteracy would likely indicate that she would have heard of the recipe and reproduced it, rather than using the sort of intertextual approach common in southern cookbooks such as those by Annabella Hill (143). Rather, her only comment on personal history occurs in a recipe that indicates her success as a mother. Zafar notes that her most telling recipe is "Pap for Infant Diet," in which she boasts of raising eleven children on this diet. This is the most overt reference to her past, and Zafar concludes, "Any prior reticence about her past … is subordinated to insuppressible pride in her success as a black mother" (143). Both infant mortality rates and her possible slave past make this achievement--seeing eleven children grow up--particularly remarkable. And yet while Zafar rightly praises Fisher's celebratory remarks, her maternal success also supports popular rhetoric of the maternal Mammy and her increasingly popular role in American culture as a reconciliatory tool of both region and race. The mammy, however, is often depicted as caring for white children over her own. Fisher's recipe indicates care for her own children, and effort at rebutting the mammy stereotype using its own rhetoric. Fisher, it seems, recognized that this was the context in which white readers would understand her maternal authority, and she carefully worked within this framework to distinguish herself from it.

Abby Fisher's "Preface and Apology" concludes, "The book will be found a complete instructor, so that a child can understand it and learn the art of cooking" (3). This choice of

words is telling, and we wonder whether it was her choice or that of her transcriber. By invoking the image of a child learning to cook, she addresses her audience on two, possibly three, levels. First, she reminds them of time spent with their childhood mammies, of learning to cook by the hands and words of this magically wise old woman. Second, by suggesting that a child can learn such techniques, she avoids the accusation that she considers herself better than a white woman. Though considered the authority on southern cooking, her authority is relegated to the collective southern imaginary. Her actual words, printed publicly, break the imaginative boundary and threaten white claims on southern culture. By referencing teaching a child rather than an adult, her remarks remain as nonthreatening as the mammy stereotype with which she will be associated. Finally, though, her remarks could contain a subtle critique, masked in the very plantation rhetoric to which her audience was accustomed. By infantilizing southern white women, Fisher rewrites the representation of blacks as having the intellectual capacities of a child. She thus counters the romanticized representation of southern white women as gentle, non-laboring, even weak, by calling it what it is: childlike. In this way, she uses their desire to construct a romantic southern memory to voice her own critique.

Of course, we must balance the rhetorical possibilities of her statement with its historical reality. Fisher could not write, and thus another person transcribed her text. Karen Hess points out several examples of recipe titles recorded phonetically, such as “Circuit Hash” instead of succotash and “Carolas” instead of crullers (Fisher 84). This suggests a close transcription of her dictation, rather than a transcriber who actively revised the text, which could lead us to the conclusion that Fisher’s words in her preface were also her own. Finally, her cookbook was published by the Women’s Co-Operative Printing Office in San Francisco, and Fisher thanks the many friends and patrons who helped her compose and publish this text. Her transcriber, likely

one of these friends or patrons, would also likely have been a participant in the process of promoting racial and gender progress by breaking down ideological or romanticized barriers created by the Mammy and its accompanying assumptions of illiteracy, childlike innocence, and subordinate contentment.

Debra Bernardi argues that African-American women writers gained power not only by fortifying their own boundaries but by destabilizing others (210). While Fisher and Hayes rely on their domestic service for their authority, they also promote their middle-class identities by emphasizing through print their ownership of their own skills and reproducible knowledge. Fisher, for example, was a businesswoman: She is listed in the 1880 San Francisco city directory as a manufacturer of pickles, preserves, etc. (Hess, "What" 77). "Mrs. Abby Fisher & Co.", along with an address of her residence/business, suggests her use of domestic skills to begin her own business, rather than using them in the home of another. Her self-representation in print, as well as her obvious business acumen (as she was well-known and supported for her work) contests boundaries of domesticity as the realm of the white middle class. A few decades later a community cookbook, also published in California, destabilizes the boundaries of white middle-class domestic authority by demonstrating in print an emerging collective racial identity based on domestic science principles.

The Federation Cook Book: An Expression of Black Middle-Class Domesticity

Middle-class African-American women were somewhat divided on their discussions of the role of domesticity in racial progress. African Americans were already associated with (in the South, practically synonymous with) cooks and domestic service. However, they also recognized that acceptance of their middle-class identity was in part reliant upon their abilities to

demonstrate "traditional" womanhood and continuity with their contemporary domestic discourse. Elizabeth McHenry writes that debates concerning proper domestic behaviors were relatively common in African-American literary societies, and that women used "club papers and the discussions they prompted" to participate "in debates through which different ideologies of womanhood were advanced and shaped" (207). They worked to strike a balance "between asserting new roles for women and affirming traditional responsibilities" (208), much like domestic scientists and cooking school experts; both groups of middle-class women worked to associate domesticity with professionalism and scientific standards as a way to assert themselves in a public arena. African-American women writers worked to create a sense of a collective racial family through their depictions of domestic spaces, similar to the project of white writers. Bernardi writes, "Like the nuclear African-American family, the racial family is vulnerable to white power" (209); African-American writers worked to better-define these boundaries in print to help black women define them in practice. They recognized the potential of the cookbook as a means to claim traditional domestic identity while documenting distinct intellectual and cultural tastes.

The Federation Cook Book is a community cookbook, compiled by the "Colored Women of the State of California" and edited by Bertha Turner, State Superintendent of Domestic Science. Its domestic science principles are visible both in the recipes included and in the rhetorical presentation of those recipes; it thus has more in common with northern modes of domestic rhetoric than with the conception of the black cook as unstudied and improvisational (Witt 109). Its "clinical mode of presentation" allows its contributors to define themselves as domestic intellectuals, in keeping with national standards of domesticity and domestic discourse (108). It thus continues a trend in African-American women's publishing. The inaugural issue of

Woman's Era, the first newspaper printed both by and for black club women, included an article titled "Domestic Science," discussed at the beginning of this chapter.[110] Its rhetoric demonstrates the similarity in concerns of middle-class women of both races, though their cultural functions often differed. Both groups displayed "feminine anxiety about how to carry out at-home responsibilities despite restricted opportunities for learning;" both also used domestic science rhetoric to indicate the importance of the middle-class woman. However, as Debra Bernardi argues, the African-American domestic space was not nearly as secure as the white or European-American domestic space.

Bernardi describes African-American domestic spaces as described in clubwomen's writing as constantly under the threat of invasion by white violence or ideology. Domestic concerns abound in African-American print culture as a means of defining and securing familial and group borders, of achieving domestic security and independence. Deitrick, for example, praised domestic skills as a means of achieving home ownership (6-7). Witt writes, "The scientific mode of recipe presentation was significant precisely because the ethos of that era for many upwardly striving blacks was less about preserving one's heritage or proving one's racial authenticity than achieving the rights and benefits of American citizenship" (109). Texts such as Fisher's, Turner's, and Hayes' demonstrate that cookbooks are products of multiple, often contradictory or conflicting, cultural influences. Clever authors, however, can capitalize on those influences to market their text, and pose their rebuttals within the text itself.

Like many cookbooks compiled by white middle-class women, *The Federation Cook Book* incorporates reflection on the chores of the American housewife using verse, suggesting

[110] This newspaper began in 1894; its title was likely drawn from Frances Harper's speech at the 1893 Exposition, in which she told audience members that they were standing "on the threshold of woman's era" (Sewall 433-34).

both leisure and culture on the part of its compilers. It also suggests that cookbooks were intended to comprise part of the body of race literature, as its compilers were also engaged in debates concerning the aesthetic and literary tastes of a middle-class African-American community. The Dedication begins, "O ye tired and weary house-wives/O ye never-tiring house-wives," placing African American women immediately in a middle-class context similar to that described by Deitrick. It goes on to suggest that they will answer "the oft-repeated question/…What shall we eat?" Whereas black women in the roles of servants would be told daily what to prepare, this cookbook subtly suggests a role reversal; white women are now in need of instruction, and black women are stepping in to provide it. The poem ends with a suggestion to "Take [this text] to your friends and neighbors/May it prove a blessing to you" which suggests a community of women constructed through recipe sharing.

Immediately following the Dedication, Bertha Turner includes "Cookery Jingles," a poem dedicated by Katherine Tillman, an African-American novelist and activist. Her poem engages the anxieties of the domestic scientists, that women devote too much time to leisure and are thus ill-prepared to manage a home. Tillman writes, "She could draw a little, paint a little,/Talk about a book./She could row a boat, ride a horse./But alas she couldn't cook" (3). The poem goes on to tell the brief tale of a woman's struggle to find a husband due to her domestic deficiencies. It rejects traditional sentimental rhetoric and argues instead, "Believe not the love tales/You find within a book/Love's fate often turns on,/The skill of the cook." Witt argues that books such as *The Federation Cookbook* "went even farther toward rebutting the plantation mammy stereotype" by promoting black middle-class identity and placing its recipes within the context of the common Victorian marriage plot rather than an employee-employer plot ("Fiction" 107-8). Tillman's treatment of marriage in this poem should not be interpreted as political

conservativism; rather, it is a "right/rite which symbolized black bourgeois social and political equality" (Witt, *Soul* 212). It engages a history of discrimination even in marriage rights for African American citizens. Nancy Cott writes that white southerners often worked to deny African Americans "the civil rights manifest in marriage" by "charging exorbitant prices, or refusing to grant marriage licenses, or failing to file certificates, or not allowing blacks to appear in court (*Public* 89). This poem's representation of marital status in print is not only a claim to middle-class domestic ideologies, but also to one's performance of legal rights. In short, Tillman's poem suggests parallel domestic goals regardless of race: that society will be bettered through domestic reform.

In 1895, Katherine Tillman published "Afro-American Women and Their Work." In this essay, she writes,

> We have been charged with mental inferiority; now if we can prove that with cultivated hearts and brains, we can accomplish the same that is accomplished by our fairer sisters of the Caucasian race, why then, we have refuted the falsehood... We owe it to God and to the Negro race, to be as perfect specimens of Christian womanhood as we are capable of being... All men are created free and equal and women ditto. (284)

While "Cookery Jingles" engaged the Victorian marriage plot, in this essay she incorporates the Victorian emphasis on morality and Christian womanhood in an effort to equal footing for her arguments concerning African-American middle-class domesticity.

Marketing the Mammy: Domestic Consumers and the Plantation Myth

A “mammy craze” in cookbook publishing began near the turn of the century, highlighting stereotypical representations of African-American women cooks and often incorporating plantation dialect and white Lost Cause nostalgia in order to contain the threat of both racial progress and northern reform to cuisine and racial identity. This publishing trend emerged as African-American print culture and “race literature” became increasingly prevalent in American society, while regional tensions still plagued American politics and ideologies. These cookbooks were also inspired by the culture of “Mammy-worship” that arose due to an increased presence of African-American stereotypes in advertising.

As domestic science continued to explore race and class in relation to domestic reform, American industry noticed a potentially profitable opportunity: “As commercial markets recognized the power to shape a domestic ideal through advertisements, the plantation kitchen validated the South as a region with superior appreciation for good food and for the good life” (Wallace-Sanders 70). As a response to the rigidity of domestic science and the myriad reform activities in the North, the South was often romanticized as a peaceful, pastoral ideal. Consumer markets capitalized on northerners’ desire for order and their nostalgia for “simpler times” to sell products that they claimed would remove the drudgery of housework by replacing the guesswork of cookery with the abilities of the Mammy, for whom cooking came naturally and who enjoyed her work. The Mammy also represented a nonthreatening, desexualized female presence. In her cookbook, Martha McCulloch-Williams describes her as “an oblate spheroid” who “stood five feet, one inch high, weighed two hundred and fifty pounds, had a head so flat buckets sat on it as of right, [and] was light on her feet [] in number twelve shoes” (15). Her caricatured physical presence distinguished her from the slight physical frame that designated white women as

morally strong, and this distinction suggested that she would be unable to challenge white women's moral dominance.

Domestic women's magazines included advertisements, such as those for Quaker Oats products, which assured women that "certain products would give them access to a special knowledge, a domestic wisdom that transformed ordinary women into exceptional housewives" (Wallace-Sanders 68). Alice Deck writes that the presence of the Mammy on product packaging suggested to the many consumers without live-in help that she would go home with them as "a spiritual guide during the cooking process" (70). The packaging thus represents a "symbolic relationship between a white housewife and a black cook" that exists outside of the actual kitchen and food product. Meanwhile, the romanticized mystique of the "Old South" was intended to lead readers/consumers to believe that southern women also had a "special knowledge," and these products gave women commercial access to the very mammy who made it all possible. While the reconstruction romance promoted literary and represented unification, the mammy suggests commercial reunification, a concept fully integrated with turn-of-the-century industrialism. As Wallace-Sanders writes, "A special blend of flours became the 'secret recipe' of Aunt Jemima pancake mix, yet the true uniqueness of the recipe might have been its blend of agrarian and industrialized idealism" (69). It was this blend that came to characterize northern perception of the South, and that was promoted in Mammy cookbooks.

From her inception in 1893 Chicago World's Fair, Aunt Jemima came to represent antebellum romanticism. Her popularity as a consumer trademark virtually installed the racially nonthreatening mammy in every American household, further standardizing the stereotype. Her domestic space, however, is that of a plantation kitchen, thus symbolizing "slaveocracy as a positive, enriching experience shared by white Americans in the North and in the South"

(Wallace-Sanders 62). Much like cookbooks, the advertisements for Aunt Jemima products became longer and more narrative by the 1920s (69). The Mammy's function as a reconciliatory tool for the South after Reconstruction is suggested by the lengthy "history" constructed by the Davis Milling Company to support the character of Aunt Jemima. In this history, Aunt Jemima was a faithful slave on a Louisiana plantation owned by Colonel Higbee. True to her stereotype, she chose to remain on the plantation after the war as his cook. In a 1926 version of this story, she was famous for her pancakes and refused to reveal the recipe until after Higbee's death, at which time she sold it to a northern milling company, and it was this pancake mix that consumers could buy in order to make pancakes as good as Aunt Jemima's (Deck 75). This story both affirms the stereotype of the mammy as loyal and wise, and suggests that the South can be part of northern industrial culture without sacrificing its romanticized image and constructed past. In the romantic terms in which this reunification was often cast, the South did not need to become like the North for the marriage to work; its distinction is what created an effective partnership.

Grace Hale writes that visual rhetoric emerged as a result of the invention of photography and motion pictures, as well as museums and expositions (such as the 1893 Columbian Exposition that brought together a variety of racialized domestic perspectives), and made it ever more possible to convey "white racial supremacy, white racial innocence, and white racial dependency" more easily than fiction of the past (8). Advertising, such as the story of Aunt Jemima or the covers or title pages of Mammy cookbooks, combined print and picture to create a powerful image of black women as contentedly and gratefully subservient. Their dark skin color and domestic behaviors not only mark them as "different" from white consumers, but also indicate that these racial markers are easy to distinguish, reinforcing racial boundaries by

removing qualities that might destabilize racial identity, such as lighter skin color, literacy, or intellectual activity. Thus society presented American women with a domestic paradox: In the hands of white domestic scientists, cooking was intellectual labor, best performed by those with careful and thorough educational training. In the hands of black women, however, cooking was instinctual, pleasurable, and individualized. Domestic scientists staked their reputation on standardization, or the reader's ability to reproduce their recipes and domestic advice exactly. Black women cooks, on the other hand, were presented as necessary precisely because their knowledge could not be reproduced, due to both their unscientific methods of cookery and their assumed illiteracy. These competing representations of late nineteenth-century cookery existed simultaneously in American society. Both suggested the distinctiveness of American tastes, one based on the intellectual labor of whites, the other based on instinctual knowledge of blacks. These designations, in keeping with the dual meanings of taste utilized by food writers, both reinforced cultural assumptions of racial identity and indicated, like reconciliation cookbooks before them, white America's preference for this uncomfortable partnership over the unfamiliar territory of racial equality.

Authors of Mammy cookbooks worked to strike an effective balance between modern cookery and southern nostalgia. They emphasized the intellectual labor of recipe writing in order to de-emphasize the bodily labor of cooking. The Mammy provided an effective centerpiece on which to base their arguments for the distinction of southern cuisine: as a racial type distinguished by her large bodily frame, she could represent taste in its physical form, allowing the white women recording her recipes to perform the intellectual labor. Southern cuisine and culture were thus distinguished by taste without appearing vulgar or "tasteless" to a reading audience.

Romanticized Power: Domestic Tastes of a Southern Middle Class

During the antebellum period, cooking texts published in the South tended to emphasize the food cultures of a plantation aristocracy. During the Civil War, manuscript recipes, often collected and distributed by any newspapers still in print, helped a region to form a sense of collective identity and purpose. Reconstruction introduced sentimental and romanticized representations of southern domesticity—published for a national audience—designed to promote psychological reunification. To remove northern fears of the South's continued violence or secession, the South became a region represented by its domestic culture, emblematized by the polite and intelligent formerly aristocratic belle who recognizes the value of marriage to a northern man over her fellow, indolent southerners. Southern women writers heralded "the white home as a central symbolic site in the New South" as a means of emphasizing their unity with the dominant image of domesticity in northern middle class discourse (G. Hale 93). Laura Edwards argues that elite southern women "began rebuilding their own racial and class identities around a particular kind of domesticity," one that allowed them to continue to differentiate themselves from the poor white and African American women who did not have the means of achieving the domestic standards of even a former aristocracy (182).

Domesticity as a form of social redemption emerged in conjunction with increased educational, career, and volunteer opportunities for southern middle-class women (Edwards 183). This occurred, of course, against the backdrop of Jim Crow laws, passed to limit the rights and mobility of southern blacks. In essence, southern domesticity as a function of a white middle-class was created to enforce the ideology of Jim Crow in the private sphere. Writes Grace Hale, "An emerging southern middle-class, then, created the culture of segregation in part by

fusing the northern middle-class antebellum precedent of posing the 'home' as a symbolic counterweight to the expanding role of the market with a white southern sense of the inviolability of white supremacy" (93). While this is similar to the ultimate project of the northern domestic scientist—the elevation of the middle-class home as a means of strengthening racial and class boundaries and reinforcing the existing power structure—southern domesticity often rejected the standardization of cuisine and technique promoted by northern reformers. Instead, they promoted the distinction of southern cuisine—its superior taste, rather than its nutritive properties, indicated the superior aesthetic and cultural tastes of southerners as collective group. Taste was, in a sense, key to their cultural influence in the decades following Reconstruction.

Hale continues to argue that "making the home a central symbolic site, an echo of an antebellum elite's plantation-centered world, also helped to ground the new middle class's cultural authority in an indigenous even if romanticized source of power" (G. Hale 93). Domestic discourse, particularly in the form of cookbooks, further established this romanticized sources of power by claiming its legacy in the real and tangible southern food cultures. I have previously discussed the distinction in southern cookery texts between the discourses of taste as a physical quality of the labor of food preparation and as the cultural status or aesthetic tastes it suggests to and about those who consume it. Cookbooks written by an emergent southern middle class continue to represent literal taste as the purview of the Mammy, while claiming the aesthetic or intellectual labor for themselves. Thus the properties of taste themselves are, to an extent, segregated in the space of the cooking text.

"Neither could she write": Revising the Labor of Southern Cookery

Rebecca Sharpless notes that while she does "cautiously" use cookbooks written by white women to understand the lives of African American domestic workers in the South, she usually "ignored the prose that white women wrote to frame the recipes, instead looking mostly at the recipes that are clearly attributed to African-American women, usually designated as 'Aunt' or 'Mammy'" (xx). These recipes, she writes, can elaborate on African-American women's tastes and skills. The prose introductions, however, clearly illustrate white women's use of taste to reinforce even a constructed racial hierarchy. By attributing physical taste to African-American women and intellectual management of taste to white women, these cookbook authors work to insert themselves into and control a food culture that has relied upon slaves and domestic workers for its history and distinction. Much as African-American women worked to counter the image of the mammy through print representation of their middle-class intellect and skills, white southern women use print to reclaim a history based on the labor of others by reinstating the historical image of the mammy. They recognize that their ownership of their own intimate practices of consumption—to some extent, the basis of their very identities--are called into question when African-American women begin writing cookbooks of their own. In order to reclaim possession of their collective history, white women begin a careful manipulation of taste, arguing that while the labor is performed instinctually by (illiterate, in their construction) African-American women, the intellectual control—manifested through manuscript and print—is the property of whites.

The craze for Mammy cookbooks began at the turn of the century. Doris Witt writes, "A good many white southern cookbooks were written to preserve recipes it was feared would be lost in the wake of the demise of slavery" ("Fiction" 107). While this is certainly true, the immense number of white-authored southern cookbooks that appeared after the Civil War

suggests a range of purpose and intention that is far more complex than mere preservation. Cookbook authors capitalized on the marketability of the southern mammy to unify not only regional identity, but racial identity, around constructed cultural memory. The Mammy cookbook performs several functions in the Progressive Era. It constructs a nostalgic and romantic imagining of the Old South as a direct response to the domestic science standards of northeastern reformers, and it actively impedes racial progress and reconciliation by promoting a stereotype characterized by the recognition of her own racial inferiority. Finally, it defines a southern community based on a taste for print. "Mammy's" cooking may have distinguished regional cuisine and unified regional identity, they argue, but print is the only labor that lasts. And print, at least in the American South, is a designation of white middle-class authority.

While domestic experts worked to fortify the white middle class in the northeast, southern white women represented a variation on this domestic identity. Writes Hale, "Southern whites constructed their racial identities on two interlocking planes: within a regional dynamic of ex-Confederates versus ex-slaves and within a national dynamic of the South, understood as white, versus the nation" (*Making* 9). They adopted a racialized approach to modern domesticity, but they still wished to claim distinctiveness for southern cuisine and the regional identities it produced. It did so by claiming that its food possessed superior taste, developed by Mammies but now reproduced and disseminated in print by southern women who learned from them. They were thus able to romanticize both southern culture and its cuisine by suggesting its superior quality but mysterious origin. In this way, southern domesticity was incompatible with northern domestic science, which worked to expose and standardize national cuisine to produce a powerful American public.

Mammy cookbooks begin with a lament for the vanishing figure of the Mammy. Katharin Bell begins her cookbook, *Mammy's Cook Book* (1927), by memorializing her former servant: "With the dying out of the black mammies of the South, much that was good and beautiful has gone out of life, and in this little volume I have sought to preserve the memory and the culinary lore of my Mammy, Sallie Miller, who in her day was a famous cook" (x). Bell continues to broaden her memory to include all southern mammies, and thus unite her audience around a communal figure: "She possessed moreover, all those qualities of loyalty and devotion which have enshrined her and her kind, and in the loving hearts of their 'White Folks,' to whom they were faithful, through every vicissitude and change of fortune" (x). Mammies, in Bell's illustration, are revered as representations of a passing era of southern history. Bell firmly places the mammy, and by extension all black women, in the realm of memory, painting them as "dying out" rather than active members of society. She can be remembered only through her recipes, Bell suggests. Betty Benton Patterson's *Mammy Lou's Cook Book* (1931) presents the most self-consciously drawn portrait of the "old southern mammy": "Mammy Lou's cook book had to be written, for Mammy Lou is a composite characterization of all the negro mammies we have known, loved, and lost awhile. These mammies are vanishing (ix).[111] Patterson demonstrates the characterization of the mammy as an instinctual cook, one's whose kitchen was subject to circumstance and temperament; in other words, she was decidedly unscientific.

Mammy cookbooks can be read as a form of blackface entertainment, popular at the turn of the century, but when viewed in the context of a domestic era dominated by the "euthenics" principles of Richards' home economists, their message becomes even more insidious. Grace Hale argues that "whites made modern racial meanings not just by creating boundaries but also

[111] Sharpless notes that Patterson attributed recipes to various cooks by (first) name, at least giving credit to the various women who made up her "composite" Mammy (xxvii).

by crossing them. Containing the mobility of others allowed whites to put on blackface, to play with and project upon darkness" (*Making* 8). White authors suggested their racial supremacy by their sympathetic depictions of vanishing black mammies. Rather than highlighting whiteness, they emoted nostalgia for blackness, virtually erasing from their illustration its modern, intellectual forms. Mammy cookbooks contained the process of racial uplift and education—in other words, social mobility—by lamenting the passing of "proper" forms of blackness. They took away the modern black woman's voice by speaking through her preferred predecessor, the domestic servant. During a time when black clubwomen understood the value placed on print and literacy and worked to use this form to establish themselves as part of the American middle-class, white women used print to combat their agency by suggesting that exceptional black women no longer exist. Furthermore, they suggest that it is now the duty of literate white women to keep their memory alive through print, thus negating the efforts of black women, despite their rapidly-increasing rate of print. Writes Hale, "These transgressions characterized and broadened modern whiteness, increasing its invisibility and its power" (*Making* 8). Mammy cookbooks are a form of representational euthenics, extinguishing blackness while representing whiteness as intellectual, virtuous, and sympathetic. Mammy cookbooks also represent the historical supremacy of whiteness by depicting blackness as "passing" or "dying out." No reason is given for their absence. Read against the backdrop of social Darwinism, which also informed domestic scientists, these authors suggest that white racial characteristics were better-suited to a modern environment; black women simply could not compete. In a culture of increased segregation, Mammy cookbooks represent spatial segregation in print. White women express their racial mobility by inhabiting the kitchens and recipes of black women as a way to obstruct their progress into middle-class modes of domesticity.

This depiction of the mammy demonstrates her difference from modern cookery methods that demand precision and consistency, and thus her racial distinction from white cooks who promote and publish these methods. Martha McCulloch-Williams, a fiction author who published *Dishes and Beverages of the Old South* (1913), begins her text with an extended introduction common to domestic science texts, but hers is instead a detailed description of the domestic education she received in "Mammy's" kitchen. She writes, however, " the kitchen proper would give Domestic Science heart failure, yet it must have been altogether sanitary" (12). Patterson also nods to the domestic science movement when she writes early in her introduction, "We wanted to tell the world about this cooking. But we knew that the recipes would have to be definite. And mammy's recipes were as secret as inventions to end war!" (ix). The term "definite" indicates both the emphasis on science in the recipe and the prevalent idea that black women were "natural" or improvisational cooks, and did not use recipes. These were, of course, ideas that had been disproven by at least three previously published African-American cookbooks, but in an effort to reclaim authority over one's culture, Patterson reverts to the concept of inherent, mythical knowledge that created distinctive southern cuisine. McCulloch-Williams likewise describes the mammy's cooking as singular and natural: "Our Mammys not only knew their business but loved it--often with a devotion that raised it to the rank of Art. Add the palate of a *gourmet* born, a free hand at the fat, the sweet, strong waters and high flavors--what wonder it is to envy those of us they fed!" (15, emphasis in original). Note that it is the mammy's "devotion" that makes her food an art, not, as Catherine Owen suggests, one's education. Note also that McCulloch-Williams writes that she is "born" with her distinctive palate. This allows her to praise the distinction of southern cuisine while maintaining that its cooks are uneducated, uncultivated, and instinctual. McCulloch-Williams engages contemporary

discourses of taste as an aesthetic pursuit, suggesting however that only the white consumers and publishers of Mammy's recipes understand its value.

Patterson describes the white community that records the culinary culture produced by southern mammies. She suggests that the true praise for the translation of these recipes into text belongs to "generations of Southern ancestry from Virginia, North Carolina, Kentucky, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and for two generations, Texas" (ix). She continues, "We cannot assume all credit for putting these recipes into definite form." Lest we believe she is going to give the southern mammy any agency in this discussion, Patterson quickly adds, "Grandmothers many times "great," as well as our own grandmother, mother, proud aunts and cousins, had done this before our day." So while she invokes the mammy as an authenticator of southern cuisine, she seems to argue that the real labor of southern food is making her "secret" recipes "definite," and for this arduous task she thanks generations of white southerners. Patterson further invokes this emphasis on a shared past by referring to white southerners first as a "clan," then as a "family": "But the cry of the clan had been, 'Keep them in the family.'" Patterson's juxtaposition of the terms "clan" and "family" suggest a further emphasis on the racial boundaries of southern heritage. She writes of the mammy that she reared "white 'chillun' to be kind and 'mannerly'" and fed them "nourishing food as well as catered to the family and the numerous 'cump'ny' that came to the Big House" (ix). In so doing, Patterson creates a community defined by race and gender, all thankful to their "mammies" for the inspiration, so to speak, to record their shared heritage through recipes. And in her text, the dying breed of the mammy is just that: an inspiration, a myth, not an individual who performed actual physical labor and upon whose labor this shared heritage rests.

In order to avoid the impropriety of basing the distinctiveness of southern cuisine on mere physical taste, authors emphasize print. By claiming white women as the laborers Patterson emphasizes print over taste for the purpose of defining a particular identity group. Patterson even eschews domestic science principles in her opening remarks about those who are "vitamining" and "dieting" (ix). To her, print is important because it allows for recipes to become more intellectual and defines a group based on its ability to write its past. She invokes "generations" of women who made these recipes "definite," suggesting that even though black women may currently be able to record their recipes, they cannot claim or substantiate a shared heritage through print. She discredits them as she "salutes" them, claiming, "We salute the memory of these mammies who read not and neither could they write" (ix).

Intriguingly, Patterson applies the same term to God that she has been applying to these recipes: "definite." After discussing her service to the white family, she writes, "From a very definite God, Mammy learned tolerance and compassion" (ix). In Patterson's terms, "definite" seems to mean "printed," and also indicates the labor of educated whites. This suggests that once again, Patterson is discrediting the mammy even of her stereotypical "inherent" qualities of maternal devotion and racial inferiority by arguing that even these were taught her by a white God. The final words of this introduction are "Mammy's," and indicate her aversion to print, a quality Patterson adds to a characters she has further denigrated. She writes, "If Mammy could hear this read, she would chuckle politely and say, '*Law, Mis', writin's got a pretty soun', but whut I wants to know, is jes' you'n Mister Bob and the chillun eaten supper er is you 'spectin' cump'ny?*" (x, emphasis in original). In other words, Mammy has no use for print; her only concern is how she can serve her white master and mistress. Patterson's text clearly demonstrates

the manipulation of racial stereotypes to assert regional communities based on race and ancestry as much as geography.

The popularity of incorporating dialect into the introduction, headings, even the recipes themselves, however, did not come into common practice until the 1920s. "Most cookbooks that use African American recipes and voices identify the cooks only by first name, mirroring daily face-to-face practice in the Jim Crow South" (Sharpless xxiv). Dialect blurs the distinction between black cook and white author, finally rendering "[the cooks] and their work invisible, as only the author's labor is visible in the text" (xxv). What remains, then, is the intellectual labor of writing and the distinctive tastes of the recipes, both a variation of and a reaction to the standardization of domestic science.[112]

Only McCulloch-Williams discusses physical taste, yet her remarks echo Catherine Owen's assertions that food, well-prepared and rationally-conceived, should bring pleasure. She writes, "Food must satisfy the palate else it will never truly satisfy the stomach" (9). Taste, she notes is the labor of the Mammy: "All I actually learned from Mammy and her cooking was--how things ought to taste. The which is essential" (20). Once she has learned taste, she is able to move on to the important task of recording "Mammy's" recipes in print. She remarks that many cookbooks "are written by folk who cook by hearsay--it is the fewest number of real cooks who can write so as not to bewilder the common or garden variety of the mind" (21). Her contribution to cookery, in other words, is not new flavors--those were developed and distinguished by the southern mammy, and the labor of physical taste was thus performed by an acceptable figure.

[112] The Mammy trend continued into the 1950s. White southern cookbook writers often attributed their cooking knowledge to their "mammies," even when the recipes themselves went unmarked. The Civil Rights movement marked the end of the prevalence of these stereotypes in much mainstream media, though they certainly remained in the minds of authors and cooks, both black and white.

She instead translates this knowledge into a form of print that women can understand. The art of cookery, for McCulloch-Williams, is the ability to write it well. Taste was established in the past; print preserves and promotes regional and racial distinctions into the future.

The World's Columbian Exposition: A Battle for Middle-Class Tastes

The 1893 World's Columbian Exposition and the Women's Congress epitomized racial, regional, and gender tensions in the final years of the nineteenth century. Despite numerous petitions, meetings, and letters, it finally took the threat of Congressional intervention to force the Board of Lady Managers to include six African-American female representatives. Bertha Palmer's decision to appease their white southern delegates at the expense of significant African-American representation led to much speculation among African Americans about the racialized motivations of the Fair's organizers.[113] While Palmer stated publicly that she was willing to appoint an African-American women to a position of leadership within the board, she never did, in fact dismissing Hallie Brown's application to direct the African-American exhibits because she was, as Palmer told her in a letter, too qualified (Paddon and Turner 25).[114] Historians have noted that while Palmer spent a great deal of time rejecting accusations of racism, she also

[113] For more on this topic, see Anna R. Paddon and Sally Turner, "African Americans and the World's Columbian Exposition" (1995). See also Gayle Gullett, "Our Great Opportunity": Organized Women Advance Women's Work at the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893" (1994).

[114] Activist and reformer Ida B. Wells, for example, was not one of the six African-American women invited to participate in the World Congress of Representative Women. She was permitted, however, with the help of African American men and women, to stand outside the gates of the "White City" (as the Fair came to be known) and distribute her essay titled, "The Reason Why the Colored American is Not in the World's Columbian Exposition" (Foster 180). This essay documented white's subordination of black Americans by means of lynching This essay documented white's subordination of black Americans by means of lynching—over 100 African Americans had been lynched in the first six months of 1893, according to Wells—as well as their discrimination at the World's Fair.

continued to reject qualified candidates for even menial positions in the fair's organization (Gullett 270). Palmer argued that the Board of Lady Managers, even without African-American representation, spoke for all women.

Meanwhile, much of the African American presence at the fair was included in exhibits like Nancy Green's depiction of Aunt Jemima. The Virginia Building, for example, was a replication of George Washington's Mount Vernon, complete with black actors playing the roles of plantation slaves. On the first floor of the Woman's Building, an exhibit titled "Women Work in Savagery" displayed the crafts of "primitive" women, including Africans, Native Americans, and Polynesian women (Gullett 269). While Palmer's Model Kitchen included the newest appliances, inventions, and culinary techniques, it was staffed entirely by white women. Black women at the World's Exposition were only permitted to perform domestic tasks under the guise of slavery.

Southern women could not imagine performing the intellectual labor of designing a Model Kitchen alongside African-American women whom they believed should do no more than work there. Middle-class African American women, meanwhile, continued to debate the definition and circumstances of their own domestic practices as they worked to distance themselves from the physical labor of slavery while still adopting the rhetoric of middle-class womanhood that dominated American discourse. Significantly, all of these groups--white northern elite, middle-class intellectuals, black clubwomen, even former domestic servants and slaves—wrote cookbooks, domestic manuals, novels, and essays, that engaged discourses of taste that had shaped American identity since its inception in the early republic. Taste and its indelible connection to one's individual and collective identity remained a powerful rhetorical device throughout the nineteenth century and beyond.

Conclusion: The Relevance of Taste

My goal in this dissertation has been to examine American cookbooks, not as an isolated genre but as an important contributor to the development of American print culture and, by extension, to ongoing discussions of American character and progress. Thanks in part to the many television and restaurant chefs; cookbook writers; food journalists, travelers, and bloggers who have made food such a prevalent part of contemporary society, explorations of American taste are embedded in every media outlet. Taste is an expansive concept, encompassing myriad meanings and applications, be they individual or communal, physical or aesthetic. By examining the history of taste in cookbook discourses, we can understand that these opposing forces are far more interconnected than they may initially appear. While we often discuss one's tastes in literature, for example, cookbooks remind us that taste is connected to the body. Though we may wish to appear more rational, more intellectual, the discourse of taste that allows for this function is rooted in the desire to manage instinctual pleasures for the good of the social body. By developing a method to understand taste in American cookbooks, the print genre with perhaps the strongest connected to the physical, individual body, we can begin to understand more fully the role of taste in our daily lives, and in the discourses of American culture.

It is unfortunate that cookbooks have often been relegated to the realm of women's history or women's studies, as these disciplines tend to regard them cautiously, viewing them either as conservative domestic writing that reinforces women' social isolation, or as illustrations

of ideal, rather than realistic, domestic culture. While they are primarily written by, for, and about women, the discourses they engage have far more in common with those whose authorship and readership may at first appear more diverse. Viewed instead in a cultural or American studies context, we can understand these documents not as women's writing but as social discourse. To examine cookbooks from the perspective of taste allows us access to the complex negotiation of body and identity, as well as perceived threats to group boundaries, taking place across all sectors of American society. Print discourse naturally favors groups with access to publishing technology; it is appealing to those wishing to shore up class, race, or gender boundaries. From their elevated position as bastions of morality and virtue, middle-class women writers used domestic rhetoric to convey class standards. By extension, those wishing to break free from cultural designations imposed upon them—often African American, immigrant, and working class women--adopted similar domestic rhetoric, revising it to suit group identities and pursuits.

This dissertation has explored the progress of cookbook writing over the course of the long nineteenth century, and argued that cookbooks develop and participate in American discourses of taste. The late eighteenth century introduced an increased emphasis on print as a means of uniting individual bodies around shared but abstract tastes for laws, literature, behavior, and, of course, foods. Republican domestic print culture emphasized the virtue of economy as a response to the aristocratic aesthetes of Europe, and allowed women a greater public role by print's suggestion that intellect was not determined by one's bodily form or function. In the antebellum period, when domestic novels promoted the religious significance of women's roles in the home, cookbooks provided a concrete guide to achieving the outcomes of the novels. They also taught an emerging female middle-class the importance of their developing roles as

consumers; recipes more explicitly began to suggest purchased items and instruct women in class-based tasks rather than assuming all supplied would be crafted in the home. As sectionalism increased leading up to the Civil War, cookbooks provided readers a way to understand and even contribute to the development of regional unity and identity through the celebration of local tastes for both food and behavior. During the Civil War, while cookbooks retained their regional significance, they also became survival manuals--especially in the South, when their recipes allowed many disparate plantations and people to share advice. During Reconstruction and reconciliation, cookbooks enjoyed perhaps their most complex social roles. They taught women to participate in the imaginative act of regional reconciliation by framing the South as romantic, domestic, and uniformly aristocratic. They also promoted a Lost Cause regional distinctiveness and the racial attitudes that accompany a plantation economy. The Progressive Era introduced a reform zeal that quickly spread throughout the middle-class population; cookbooks echoed its emphasis on running the home as a public business through science and economy. It brought with it, however, the possibility of class and racial mobility and progress that domestic experts perceived as a threat to their project of "race betterment." They worked instead to naturalize class status through diet. Finally, cookbooks gave African American women a public forum to display their middle-class values, one that was quickly quelled by white women writing cookbooks celebrating the racial stereotype of the "Mammy."

Finally, this dissertation has argued that cookbooks and fiction exist in dialogue with one another in nineteenth-century women's print culture. Our approaches to each need not be vastly different, nor should we privilege one over the other. Many nineteenth-century writers, both male and female, black and white, published in a variety of genres. Along with fiction, both in novel and sketch form, writers such as Sarah Hale, Lydia Child, Mary Virginia Terhune (Marion

Harland), even Lafcadio Hearn, composed essays, journal articles, and cookbooks. Writers borrowed from one another and referenced one another; they combined, adapted, and experimented with print to create a culture of genre fluidity that requires modern readers to take a broader view of the cookbook, the recipe, and of American literature as a whole, in order to understand their interconnected compositions and social functions. Elbert and Drews write, "Literary food studies encourages scholars to take interest not only in scenes of eating and dining, food production and preparation, but also in the application of culinary metaphors and the rhetoric of consumption" (11). Elizabeth Strong Worthington's *How To Cook Husbands* (1898) is an example of the genre fluidity common in women's print culture, as well as its pervasive emphasis on food and domesticity. Worthington, however, varies the common domestic trope of the married white middle-class woman cooking to nurture her family. She presents instead an unmarried heroine doling out marital advice in the form of recipes. It also varies the cookbook genre, further blurring the boundaries between literature and cookbook: Worthington's novel is based on a common prose recipe in late nineteenth-century cookbooks. By making humans the subjects of her recipes, Worthington demonstrates the flaws in society's emphasis on the authority of the recipe in determining domestic standards.

How to Cook Husbands: A Satire of Domestic Advice

It is common for cookbooks, particularly compiled or community cookbooks, to include poems, biblical passages, even recipe variations giving lighthearted advice, often in rhyme. Many fundraising cookbooks published near the turn of the century included a recipe called "How to Cook Husbands" (Bower, *Recipes* 25). The language of the recipe, which likens

creating the ideal husband to perfectly cooking a piece of meat, is full of remarkably vivid, even violent, images. Though the language varies from one cookbook to another, the images remain the same. The recipe begins, "A great many husbands are spoiled by mismanagement," and proceeds to list the ways women mistreat husbands, suggesting that they treat vegetables with more care (10). Much like proper food preparation, it suggests, marital bliss requires patience, education, and care. The recipe uses market imagery to describe choosing a husband, and asks women to know their "tastes" and choose him themselves rather than being misled by appearance: "Be sure to select him yourself, as taste differs." This use of taste again suggests the blending of instinctual and trained tastes, yet in the context of romantic love and marriage, adds a level of sexual desire that contrasts with the austere Victorian domesticity usually presented in cooking texts. The rest of the recipe alternates between expected marital allegories such as, "Tie him in the kettle with a strong cord called Comfort, as the one called Duty is apt to be weak," or "Make a clear, strong, steady fire out of Love, Neatness, and Cheerfulness," and cooking imagery that, when applied to the romantic love of a human, does not translate comfortably. For example, the recipe notes that husbands "sometimes fly out of the kettle, and become burned and crusty on the edges, since, like crabs and oysters, you have to cook them alive." Another step instructs them to place him near the fire and warns, "If he sputters and fizzles, don't be anxious; some husbands do this till they are quite done." Finally, it suggests that women not "stick any sharp instrument into him, to see if he is becoming tender. Stir him gently; watching the while lest he should lie too close to the kettle, and so become inert and useless" (11). If these instructions are followed carefully, women should create "very digestible" husbands, the recipe concludes.

This recipe contains all of the narrative recipe components that Colleen Cotter describes in "Claiming a Piece of the Pie": Its title is a clear indication of its content, it orients the reader to the problem it seeks to solve, lists necessary ingredients (Love, Neatness, etc.), provides clear instructions, and evaluates the outcome if these steps are carefully followed. By its extended application of culinary metaphors, "How to Cook Husbands" is in essence a narrative sketch as much as a recipe; the tastes it promotes are both individual and cultural; while culture dictates that "proper" women must marry, each woman has control over the success of her individual situation just as a cook can season a dish "to taste." In 1898, Elizabeth Strong Worthington expanded this recipe into a full-length novel, also titled *How to Cook Husbands*.[115] The narrator begins her text by telling readers that she is a single 34-year old woman who ran across a newspaper clipping containing this recipe. She reads it in its entirety alone in her library, and it inspires a litany of comic musings of what her life would be if she were married with children. Throughout the next 200 pages, she applies its instructions to her life, at times offering her married neighbors her own "recipes" for their "marital indigestion" (11) and declaring herself an expert in "matrimonial cookery" (177).

"How to Cook Husbands" combines the recipe, the emblem of domestic, industrial science, with marriage, the stronghold of sentimental fiction. It not only ignores taste, it removes

[115] I have found little biographical information about this author beyond her print history often included on the title pages of her novels. She appears to have been a popular novelist and children's fiction writer in the late nineteenth-century, and her works include a sequel to *How to Cook Husbands*, titled *The Gentle Art of Cooking Wives* (1900). She also used a pen name, Griffith A. Nichols, under which she wrote *The Biddy Club: and how its members, wise and otherwise, some toughened and some tenderfooted in the rugged ways of housekeeping, grappled with the Servant Question, to the great advantage of themselves, and, as they hope, of many others* (1887). Her body of work relies on the recipe and advice genre for her novels. Though *How to Cook Husbands* is dedicated to "a little girl who will someday, I hope, be skilled in all branches of matrimonial cookery," the novel itself, from its content to its construction—similar to that of Catherine Owen's cookbook novels--suggests that it was written for adults.

food from the recipe altogether and instead explores the critical potential of the genre. Worthington's novel engages the desire of domestic scientists to professionalize the home, claiming at the end of Chapter I, "It is a good cook that makes an appetizing dish out of poor material, and when a woman makes a delicious husband out of little or nothing she may rank as a *chef"* (26). What follows, however, is a satire of the domestic science movement, nineteenth-century cookery writing, and women's faith in the recipe as a social cure. No character or institution is free from Worthington's evaluation. Men and women, marriage and motherhood, science and sentimentality, all are combined in the novel to give a pointed critique of industrial culture and domestic advice literature, and to illustrate the far-reaching, and perhaps unanticipated, application of reform mentality. Worthington's domestic satire gains its rhetorical power from its strategic use of the recipe.

Worthington's novel is best understood when placed alongside the genre of novelized cookbooks, popularized in the 1880s by Catherine Owen. Though similar in form to *Ten Dollars Enough*, *How To Cook Husbands* is not a novelized cookbook in the traditional sense. Its recipes have nothing to do with food, and it does not explicitly seek to reform the home. Its recipes concern marital behaviors and preferences, rather than a classification of tastes based on the job and status of the consumer. *How To Cook Husbands* is a nineteenth-century romantic comedy, a single woman's *Pilgrim's Progress*, and a culinary "Modest Proposal." At times it is difficult to tell which genre is being privileged. It combines characters with allegorical names such as Mr. Chance and Mrs. Cynic and a self-deprecating but remarkably self-aware heroine. Though a novel, it takes the form of a traditional cookbook: a first-person narrator speaks directly to the reader, rather then giving instructions through an intermediary listener. Worthington even formats the text like a cookbook: most recipes incite a break in the action and feature a centered,

italicized title reading "*Recipe*," followed by clearly ordered instructions. Meanwhile she satirizes both the recipe form as well as its projected outcomes by applying such a precise genre to very imprecise human behavior. She mocks women's previous attempts to control their husbands through weapons such as "Women's Clubs" yet she does not explicitly posit a solution. The closest she comes appears in a scene near the end of the novel, when she capitalizes on the violent language of the "How To Cook Husbands" recipe to suggest what a woman might want to do with an evil husband. In this way, her "master recipe," so to speak, provides both an entry point to her critique of nineteenth-century women's culture and a solution to the evils of that culture. And while the language of the recipe is, of course, figurative, at times it seems to only thinly disguise women's feelings of frustration and impotence.

The book is primarily composed of loosely connected vignettes in which narrator and heroine Constance Leigh observes her neighbors and inserts her marital advice in the form of recipes at fitting moments throughout the text. Yet oddly Leigh's listeners are rarely present to hear her advice. Prior to giving one recipe she notes: "It was at the close of this mellow day that I sat in my library alone, before a hickory fire. Alone, did I say? Nay, Mrs. Simpson sat before me in the opposite rocker. You could not have seen her, or heard her, but she was there, and was complaining of Mr. Simpson" (70). Within the context of the fictional narrative, readers might be terribly offended by such a judgmental unmarried woman. But Worthington is also reminding them of the reading practices required of the cookbook genre. Recipes are participatory, and to give advice to an imagined listener indicates that the participant is not to be found within the text, but outside of it. By including this textual marker of the cookbook genre within the context of a novel, Worthington demonstrates the fluidity of women's print culture. Worthington also includes a critique of women, one echoed by many domestic scientists throughout the end of the

century. According to Laura Shapiro, domestic scientists believed that their vision to reform the home through the application of scientific knowledge would be thwarted only by "women themselves" (39). Leigh believes her marital advice will be received in much the same way. She notes: "the invisible Mrs. Purblind … would listen to reason, which is more than could be said for the visible creature of that name" (70).

The advice itself is a satire of women's behavior. While the structure of the first-person narrator speaking to an imagined listener suggests the role of the reader in a recipe text, the content all but mocks both reader and recipe. The only food-related recipe in the text indicates the inadequacies of the recipe. Her opening remarks (or orientation clause) relate the advice she is about to give Mrs. Simpson to the common and foolproof technique for determining the freshness of eggs: "Mrs. Simpson, I can offer you some recipes which I warrant you will work infallibly; but they are like the recipe for determining the interior condition of eggs, which says, put them in water; if they are bad they will either sink or swim" (Worthington 66). Yet Worthington suggests that no recipe, no matter how well-written, can replace critical thought. Leigh states in regards to the egg sinking or swimming, the she has forgotten which result means the egg is fresh. Likewise, she continues: "Now try this recipe I am about to give you, and it will either make Mr. Simpson unwilling to take a step in the way of recreation without you, or it will make him stalk forth by himself, as lonely as a crocus in early March—I have forgotten which; but try it often enough, and you will learn."

The mockery continues in the "recipes" Leigh doles out. To Mrs. Purblind, Leigh advises:

> "Talk on disagreeable themes, talk persistently and ceaselessly; never let up; … On his worst nights, always select his relatives for your theme; harp upon their

> faults; their failures in life; their humiliations; the unpleasant things people say of them. Then if he waxes irritable, express surprise; … add that it's plain now that he has combined with his relatives against you, and that you should be surprised if he and they didn't effect a separation. … By this time, if not sooner, he will remember that he has night work clamoring for him at the office, … and it would be well for you to conclude your remarks by observing that if he bangs the front door so hard every time he goes out, he will loosen the hinges." (69-70)

What makes these recipes so humorous is Worthington's adept manipulation of the traditional recipe components. Rather than giving each recipe a descriptive title it is simply titled "recipe." Rather than using a traditional orientation clause to explain the recipe that will follow, Leigh gives her listeners two contradictory outcomes and tells them to try the recipe to learn which is accurate. Finally, rather than stating an outcome, Leigh requires her listeners to understand her tone and realize their errors on their own.

Though Leigh's insistence on chastising other women in the novel seems to follow a grin-and-bear-it theory of marital bliss, when set against the backdrop of "How to Cook Husbands" her advice takes on new meaning. The core of this recipe, and for that matter any recipe, is an emphasis on control, specifically a woman's control of the kitchen and by extension, the home and its members. Leigh's advice does not ultimately suggest that women are to blame for men's bad behavior. Instead, when wives complain of bad husbands, she suggests that women do not fully utilize their position of power. They base their lives on the wisdom of the recipe, but do not internalize its inherently violent language, highlighted by a recipe that applies this language to a human man. Leigh praises one example of a woman who was able to perfectly cook her husband--appropriately named Mr. Daemon--by matching his abusive temper with even

more violent outbursts of her own. Thus Worthington criticizes women who believe that precision is the key to the recipe's rhetorical power, while ignoring their constant message that timidity and self-sacrifice have no place in the kitchen.

In fact, violent imagery--though never actually carried out--pervades this text. This imagery is often connected to discussions of women adhering to cultural expectations to the detriment of their own happiness or desires. The first thoughts Leigh develops of her imaginary children are not nurturing images that spring from the typical literature of the "true woman." Instead, she imagines a constantly ringing doorbell with complaints of her children unintentionally but violently murdering her neighbors: "Several of them have been arrested for blowing up the neighbors with dynamite firecrackers." "One or two of them have just been dragged from beneath the electric cars. They seem to be as well as ever, but three of the passengers died of fright." (14). When she proceeds to imagine her husband, she wonders what she might do if he did not obey her. She remarks first, "Cudgels are out of date." Her next comment, however, seems to criticize other women's public efforts far more than this imaginary man's private rebellion. She comments, "Were he an alderman, I might take a Woman's Club to him, but a husband has been known to laugh this instrument to scorn" (15). The "instrument" in question is, of course, an example of the many women's reform groups that were cropping up across the nation to address social ills during the Progressive Era. Yet her comment points to the perceived impotence of these groups, or to men's scorn of women who become involved with them. At the very least, her remark indicates that a Woman's Club could not force a man to change. While we could read this as yet another critique of irritating wives, it could also point to the frustration shared by many women of the era--that despite the ability and dedication to reform their society, they held virtually no official public power. What is also hidden within this

remark and set up by the structure of the novel, is the perception of the roles of wives as opposed to the roles of single women. While single women could be well-educated public reform figures--though not elected of course--wives were expected to make their husbands and families their first priority, and to long for a public identity made one subject to scorn. Read in this way, Leigh's remark is not critical of women's clubs per se, but of the cultural perception of married women who participate in them. It allows us to understand the imagery of the "How to Cook Husbands" recipe as violent and frustrated metaphorical revenge, rather than lighthearted acceptance of traditional roles.

Worthington explicitly acknowledges the violent language of the recipe in Leigh's later conversation with a neighbor. Leigh tells Mrs. Purblind a story of Mrs. Earnest's husband who, though not overtly cruel, consistently ignores his wife's attempts to converse with him or to tell him any details of her life. She says of her efforts, "She longs to make her home attractive, but her husband has no sympathy with this desire; to him home is merely the place where he finds food and lodging, and a safety valve for such moods and tempers as he is obliged to keep under control in the business world" (119). Hers were not frivolous tastes aimed at public display of material status; she simply wished to create a comfortable domestic space. Women readers would certainly understand her husband's behavior as an affront to their already-limited roles, and their charge to make the home the center of moral virtue in the face of a corrupt world. They might also recognize the implied weakness of domestic reform, that though women wish to run the home as a business, it will never be recognized as such. Laura Shapiro remarks of this paradox: "Of course [the domestic scientists] failed in their crusade, how could they not? They chose domesticity as a way of getting out of the house, and food as a means of transcending the body" (10). Yet it is interesting that Leigh reserves her most vehement judgment for this man,

though she has described husbands whose actions initially seem far worse. Mrs. Purblind asks Leigh, "How would you serve such a man, if you were his wife?" The double-entendre of "serve" is both intentional and ominous. For the first time Leigh does not keep her violent desires to herself. To Mrs. Purblind, she remarks emphatically, "*Roasted!*" (123). This is the first direct acknowledgment and application of the violent culinary language expressed in the recipe itself.

Worthington's satire represents a boiling over of women's hidden frustrations and desires--an image the novel recognizes in its final lines. Randolph Chance, the narrator's love interest after a cat-and-mouse courtship, has returned from Buffalo to tell her of his true feelings, but finds himself unable to do so. Instead, he chats about the furniture in his brother's home in greatly irritating detail. Readers should recognize the role-reversal taking place here. While Leigh has criticized wives throughout the novel for bothering their husbands with insignificant domestic details or material tastes, now her future husband is doing the same to her. At her wit's end, Constance interrupts him, saying pointedly, "I suppose you want me to marry you." The novel concludes:

> Now this little scene, I suppose, is what makes Randolph always say I proposed to him. This remark, oft repeated, sometimes under very trying circumstances, is his one disagreeableness. But I let it pass without comment, for I realize it is the spout to the kettle, and I am thankful that the steam has so safe and harmless an outlet. If I were to boil him too hard, he would probably overflow, and dim the fire; but I am *very cautious*, and love still burns with a clear, bright flame. (190)

It would be easy to read this ending as typical of domestic fiction. Nina Baym writes that women's fiction can end in marriage only when both parties have achieved self-identification,

and thus the marriage "saves" neither but instead unites two independent souls (*Woman's* xxvi). This is true of Worthington's novel; however, it does not fully explain its conclusion. While it seems that Worthington is composing a new metaphor that likens nurturing a marriage to boiling water in a kettle, upon closer inspection we see that this is not entirely the case. In this new metaphor, the husband is represented by water rather than meat; he--not marriage--is still the "material" being cooked, and his disagreeable remarks are the spout through which he can let off steam. This recipe picks up where "How to Cook Husbands" leaves off. Worthington suggests that even the best cooking by the most educated wives cannot prevent a man's poor behavior of treating the home as an outlet for his aggressions, just as husbands have been doing throughout the novel. As such, she points out that progress for women is impossible if they pursue reform without examining tradition. One culinary metaphor simply replaces another, just as domestic science is simply a modern form of domestic confinement. And yet like the women reformers she appears to criticize, she too accepts men as inherently corrupt and blames women for their methods of cooking them. Viewed in this context, the final image of the boiling kettle is neither romantic nor conclusive. This recipe functions just as her earlier marital advice did: it satirizes women's absolute faith in the recipe by suggesting that they are merely performative iterations of a genre that grows increasingly more precise but never fully solves the problem. Perfecting the recipe is only a textual exercise if one cannot remember, or perhaps does not know, the desired outcome.

How to Cook Husbands demonstrates the extreme versatility of the cookbook genre and its references to taste. It places a common recipe from a traditional cookbook genre and embeds it in a novel to further explore its contradictions and possibilities, the sources of its rhetorical power. It does not overtly explain its popularity, but it suggests through satire that this recipe is

far more than a humorous application of culinary terminology. It suggests that women should examine their individual situations and their common need for this particular brand of metaphor to represent their culinary endeavors in community cookbooks. It also demonstrates the establishment of the cookbook as an integral part of American print culture, one powerful enough to support a satire.

Is a discussion of taste still relevant?

At first glance, it seems that Americans' tastes concerning food have changed drastically. Rather than the austere or scientific, we crave pleasure. We want to feel comforted by comfort food, soulful by soul food, we want to be transported by foreign cuisines and experience the transcendence of a perfect meal. Have we truly reverted to a culture driven by instinct and pleasure? Or is our taste for pleasure still a function of food representation?

Food television, food blogs, food magazines, and food reviews abound. We read them privately and discuss them publicly; no topic is at once more intimate and more universal. Friends post pictures of their dinners or restaurant meals on Facebook, magazines compete for the most innovative or alluring food photography, cookbooks grow larger and more expensive as they include large color images of prepared dishes, attractive chefs, even sumptuous ingredients in their most romantic, natural—though stylized--state. The umbrella term that has come into general acceptance for this type of graphic food representation is food porn. While this would seem to cater to our most basic instincts, pornography denotes both the pleasurable, explicit, and seductive qualities of modern food representation, as well as the act in which "we imagine cooking and eating while watching others actually do it" (Ray 56). Our tastes are still dictated by a cultural force outside of ourselves.

Ray's analysis of food television begins by questioning why food scholars seem to accept, even revere, Julia Child, while dismissing cooks such as Emeril Lagasse as excessive, theatrical, even superficial. Ray writes in explanation, "Perhaps there is something about food, which is both so essential to life and still unavailable to so many (about a billion people are estimated to be hungry today),that makes any playfulness, any degree of aestheticization, open to the charge of excess and moral decay" (56). He eventually suggests, however, that perhaps print is at the core of our current food culture: "But when with the revolution in printing we moved from cooking as an expression of bodily memory to cookbooks, we let loose a process that eventually brought us here" (57). "Here" is a culture with voracious tastes for a variety of food items, cuisines, and media. "Here" is a culture that avidly debates whether terms such as "foodie" indicate overly-cultivated tastes, food snobbery, or an obsession with food as a display of class and intellectual status. "Here" is a culture of cookbook collectors and cookbook reading clubs, of recipe writing, sharing, and adapting. Yet an obsession with "here" often means that we ignore what came before, what brought us here, and what impact prior food cultures made on their societies just as food television is impacting ours.

Cookbooks are immensely popular today; they are instructional manuals, travel literature, memoirs, coffee table books, parenting guides, collectors' items, even bedtime reading material. They cover nearly every type of cuisine, food movement, diet, and ingredient imaginable. When we add to this category recipes created by television chefs, downloadable online, recipes described in magazines, even our drive to reproduce and record dishes consumed in restaurants, we see that we live in a world consumed by recipes.

For nineteenth-century readers and modern readers/viewers alike, consumption is a necessity and cooking is a duty; food representation, however, is a form of social discourse. Food

representation is a form of pleasure, education, catharsis, even horror. We use food to define our selves and others, and to police or traverse these boundaries. Food representation, be it in print or on television, allows it to perform these functions daily. Its primary function is to dictate cultural standards of taste, and to classify society based on awareness and performance of taste. Cookbooks are an essential component of American history, literature, and culture. They demonstrate the intimate, daily application of cultural tastes as a means of defining individual and social bodies, and remind readers that taste is connected to both and thus a discourse accessible to all.

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EDUCATION

- University of Mississippi 2004 - 2006
  M.A., English
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PUBLICATIONS

- "Marketing the Mammy: Race, Reform, and the American Cookbook, 1880-1940." Forthcoming in *Southern Foodways and Southern Literature* (tentative title). Spring 2012.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- "'How To Cook Husbands': Nineteenth-Century Community Cookbooks and Sociosexual Empowerment." South Central Modern Language Association, Oct. 2010. Fort Worth, Texas.
- Panel Chair, "Consumption and Temptation: The South's Struggle with Modernity." Society for the Study of Southern Literature Biennial Conference, Apr. 2010. New Orleans, Louisiana.
- "Reading Regional Economies and Identities: The Role of the Recipe in Civil War Literature and Culture." Society for the Study of Southern Literature, Apr. 2010. New Orleans, Louisiana.
- Panel Chair, "Foodways, Material Culture, and the Discipline of Consumption in the Atlantic World." Society of Early Americanists Biennial Conference, Mar. 2009. Hamilton, Bermuda.
- "Franklin and Simmons: Developing the Discipline of Early American Food Writing." Society of Early Americanists Biennial Conference, Mar. 2009. Hamilton, Bermuda.
- "Mary Randolph's *The Virginia Housewife*: The Global South in Nineteenth-Century Food Writing." Southern American Studies Association, Feb. 2009. Fairfax, Virginia.
- "Global Agrarianism and Grounded Consumerism: Postsouthern Foodways and Food Literature." Society for the Study of Southern Literature, Apr. 2008. Williamsburg, Virginia.

FELLOWSHIPS AND GRANTS

- Graduate School Dissertation Fellowship, Fall 2010
- Graduate Student Council Research Grant, 2010

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

- Graduate Instructor:
  - English 250: Applied Writing (Summer 2007, 2008)

- English 225: British Literature to the 18th Century (Summer 2005, 2006, 2010)
- English 102: Freshman Composition II, Themed Writing
  Food, Family, Memory, and the American Dream (Spring 2009)
- English 101: Freshman Composition I (Fall 2008)

- Teaching Assistant:
  - English 223: American Literature to 1865 (Spring 2006, 2007)
  - English 222: Survey of World Literature since 1650 (Fall 2006)
  - English 221: Survey of World Literature to 1650 (Fall 2005)
  - English 224: American Literature since 1865 (Spring 2005, Fall 2009, Spring 2010)
  - English 225: British Literature to the 18th Century (Fall 2004)

SERVICE AND ADMINISTRATIVE EXPERIENCE

- Vice President, English Graduate Student Body, 2009 - 2010
- Coordinator, English Graduate Student Body Professional Development Seminar Series, 2009 - 2010
- English 101: Freshman Composition I Curriculum Committee, 2009 - 2010
- Information Literacy Committee, 2008 - 2010
- National Writing Project Summer Institute, Summer 2008
- Director of Freshman Assessment, Freshman Composition Program, 2007 - 2008
- Graduate Ambassador, Office of Outreach, 2006 - 2008
- Secretary, Graduate Student Council, 2006 - 2008
- Conference Chair, Southern Writers, Southern Writing Graduate Conference, 2004 - 2006.
- Honors Day Committee, 2005 - 2007
- Director of Graduate Affairs, Graduate Student Council, 2005 - 2006.